

# FILE 770



Brimma Spacat 1/11  
Ryus 1/11

## Editorial Notes by Mike Glycer

My deepest thanks go out to everybody who supported *File 770* for the Best Fanzine Hugo. It's very much an honor to win, and a pleasure to know fans like what they're reading here.

And it was great to experience that moment together with Diana. I'd have loved for her book to win, too -- *The Company They Keep* was up for Best Related Book -- but we were happy so many people at Denvention 3 came up to tell her they enjoyed and had voted for it.

**Free Electronic Hugo Nominees Are Expensive!** I've been laughing quietly at myself about this since Westercon. The joke is on me, and I'm ready to confess.

Even if it's supposed to be good marketing, fans are tempted to feel like they've put one over on the universe when somebody gives them free electronic copies of four Hugo-nominated novels. I do, anyway. I thought: How great is this, I'm saving fifty or sixty bucks, and the most convenient place to have the text is on my computer.

I felt so confident about getting everything read before the voting deadline that I told Kathryn Daugherty she could put me on a panel at Westercon to discuss all the Hugo nominees.

Then as weeks slipped by, I found that I



**"Sheer Terror"** is Alan White's caption for this photo taken me at the Las Vegas Westercon.

needed all my time in front of the computer to do my work, or complete the new *File 770*. And I didn't really want to

spend any more hours in front of the machine reading these novels.

On the other hand, there were times I needed to wait for a doctor's appointment, or watch my daughter play at the park, when it would be very easy to pass the time reading a book.

So with the Hugo deadline bearing down, and not wanting to embarrass myself in front of Kathryn Daugherty and Chris Garcia on our panel at Westercon, I bought copies of all five nominated novels and read them. And had a great time discussing them at Westercon.

Jerry Pournelle wrote last year that "Eric Flint of Baen Books has looked at this closely, and [and he finds no] harm comes from electronic publication of a book available in print... if there is an effect it is probably positive: that is, someone begins to read a work of fiction (authorized or pirated, it makes no difference) and may well be influenced to go buy a copy. We know that happens because people tell us so." Now I'm one of the statistics, and I still can't really explain it.

How could this have happened to me, an experienced, canny fan? After I worked the universe for four free novels? I'm melting, melting.....

### *Scotty and Gordo Get Only Halfway to Heaven*

The Explorers Flight mission carrying the ashes of *Star Trek* actor James Doohan, astronaut Gordon Cooper and 206 others who paid to have their remains shot into space, failed to reach orbit after launch on Aug. 2.

After the main engine shut down and when the first and second stages should have separated, a fuel leak in the engine chamber caused the two stages to bump together. As a result, all was lost.

Fans had waited several years for the fulfillment of Doohan's wish to have his ashes orbited. His ashes would have

joined those of Gene Roddenberry, Timothy Leary and Eugene Shoemaker, already successfully launched into space.

### *Court Divides Norton Estate*

Two heirs of Andre Norton's estate went to court over the rights to 130 of her books with royalty income worth perhaps \$70,000-\$80,000 annually.

Norton had left Dr. Victor Horadam "the royalties from all posthumous publication of any of my works." Sue Stewart, Norton's caretaker at the end of her life, was named as the beneficiary of the "residuary clause" -- all other property or money not explicitly as-

signed in the will.

Stewart argued that the will intended for her, not Horadam, to get the royalty income from any works published before Norton died. Horadam asked judges to provide an interpretation of "posthumous publication."

In the end, Tennessee's Court of Appeals ruled that Stewart would control copyrights to books published during Norton's life and get royalties for the reprints, but Horadam would retain royalties on works published for the first time after her death.

The Court of Appeals did affirm a lower court decision removing Sue Stewart as executrix of the Norton estate in favor of an independent third party.

**File 770 154**

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# News of Fandom

## Fans Present at Tennessee Church Shooting

Fans and their family members were among the congregants at a West Knoxville, Tennessee church on July 27 when a man opened fire. They escaped unharmed, but the gunman killed two people and wounded half a dozen others.

Curt Phillips knew five people from Knoxville fandom who were seated together in a pew directly in front of one of the critically injured gunshot victims.

Debbie Hughes reported additional details online: "Our close friends Jamie Parkey, Amy Broyles and their children were there, Chloe Airoidi the mom of Jamie was there and Amira Parkey - Daughter of Jamie and the late Maia Plasil was there as well. None of them were hurt. Jamie was also one of the men who wrestled the gunman to the ground after he shoved his mom and his middle daughter under the pew. Amy was in the crying room with her youngest daughter and was shielded by glass from most of the gunfire."

Chloe Airoidi, is a long time Knoxville fan and an organizer of the Knoxville Area Science Fiction Association.

## GUFF

Sue Ann Barber and Trevor Clark won the 2009 GUFF race (Get Up Fan Fund, this time around). They will attend the UK Eastercon in April. They edged Alisa Krasnostein and Norah Ding (aged "almost two", with her mother). Voting ended November 24, with the pair receiving 88 of the 118 ballots cast.

## Clarke Condolence Book Delivered

After the sudden death of Sir Arthur C. Clarke last spring, Yvonne Penney created a book of condolences to be sent to the Clarke family and circulated it at conventions for fans to sign. The Penneys brought it to Ad Astra and at Corflu Silver. Then, Apogee Books publisher Rob Godwin took it to several space conferences.

Fred Clarke now has the book. Godwin spoke with him by phone and reported back to Yvonne: "He got the book and was genuinely *thrilled* to receive it. I wrote a blurb in the front explaining that it was started by you. Anyway, he just told me that the local town council have finally agreed to give him a building to put in an Arthur C. Clarke museum and the book will be going on display



under glass with all the pages blown up and displayed behind it. Just thought you'd like to know that it was a *really* nice thing you did and it was genuinely appreciated. Last person to sign it was Buzz [Aldrin]..."

Yvonne's reaction was, "I'm so touched by this... really... I was not expecting this."

## Wombat in Financial Times

That globetrotting Wombat, Jan Howard Finder, was mentioned in *Financial Times* columnist Michael Skapinker's July 22 piece praising Tourism Australia's new advertising campaign.

Comparing it with New Zealand's attempts to capitalize on *Lord of the Rings*, Skapinker wrote:

"People who visit a country purely because they have seen a film tend to be slightly unusual. One Tolkien-obsessed US visitor to New Zealand, Jan Howard Finder ("all lower case, like e.e. cummings"), told *The New York Times* in 2004 that part of the joy of a *Lord of the Rings* trip was traveling with '15 other nut cases'."

Yes, a blind squirrel occasionally finds a nut, while a wide-eyed Wombat finds many more.

[Source: Martin Morse Wooster.]

## Keep Watching for Keep Watching the Skies

A new edition of LA fan Bill Warren's *Keep Watching the Skies*, the definitive book about science fiction movies made in the 1950s, is on the way. Bill has turned in the 750,000-word manuscript, along with seven pounds of photos, and illustrations by Frank Dietz. Howard Waldrop wrote the introduction. Bill explains how he became acquainted with Waldrop:

"I've never met Howard, and only talked to him on the phone twice (once the day before his surgery), but years back he wrote me a fan letter regarding *Keep Watching the Skies*. This was about the time I heard of his Howard Waldrop's Condensed Cream of 1950s Science Fiction Movies presentation at a convention in, I think, Denver. He acted out key scenes from a lot of the movies. For 3-D movies, he hid under the table and threw wadded-up paper at the audience. *That* guy I decided I just had to know. So we started exchanging letters, beginning when he was in Texas, continuing on through his fly-fishing sojourn in Washington (state), then when he returned to Texas.

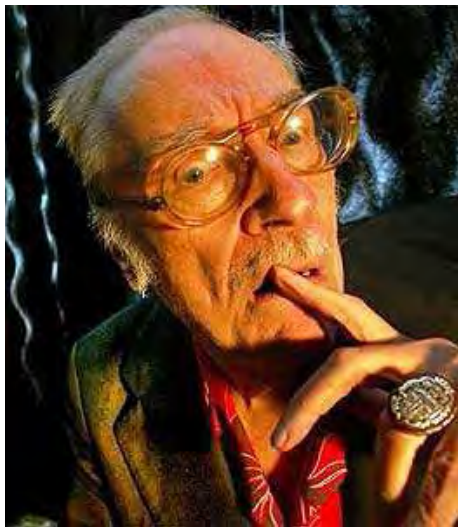
"He wrote a story about the kids from 1950s SF movies — the boy befriended by Klaatu, the kid menaced by Martians in *Invaders From Mars*, Tobor the Great's pal Gadge, etc. — and dedicated it to William Schallert, Joe Dante and me."

## TAFF

Voting has opened for the 2009 Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund and continues until April 18. Steve Green and Tom Womack are standing for TAFF, the winner to attend Anticipation, next year's Worldcon in Montreal.

Steve Green has a long history as a fanzine publisher and con organizer. He's been a regular columnist for *The Drink Tank*. He recently revived the newzine *Critical Wave*; which he co-edits with Martin Tudor. His nominators are Randy Byers, Lloyd and Yvonne Penney, Mark Plummer, Martin Tudor and Peter Weston.

Tom Womack is a veteran of fandom on Usenet who focuses his efforts these days on [fivemack.livejournal.com](http://fivemack.livejournal.com). His nominators are Liz Batty, Clare Boothby, Vicki Rosenzweig, Alison Scott and Geri Sullivan.



**Forry Ackerman** in 2003. Photo appeared in the Los Angeles Times.

### *Ackerman Severely Ill*

Forrest J Ackerman is battling pneumonia and congestive heart failure. He was hospitalized in late October, then returned home just before Halloween. Close friends believe he does not have long to live, although they guessed rightly that he would respond to an outpouring of cards and letters. At this writing, you can send one of your own – the address is: Forrest J Ackerman, 4511 Russell Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027.

When premature death reports hit the internet in early November, Forry's assistant Joe Moe issued a statement:

"As I've said before, Forry gleefully relishes the early obits and other stuff. But it's important that friends and fans don't suffer distress from false reports and mere opinions. Recently, for example, someone wrote to me that they'd heard that Forry is "starving himself to death." That is completely UNTRUE. Forry has increasing difficulty swallowing. He chokes when he tries to eat or drink anything. Still, he's requesting Ensure and lots of water and doing his best to get it down.



**Tackett, Moffatt, Woolston, Alderson** at L.A.Con I, 1972.

"Let me make this absolutely clear. Forry is not willing to hurt himself to make a quick exit. He's just unwilling or desiring to get better. He's made the choice to bide his time until he goes to sleep and doesn't wake up. He's not ill with infection anymore but he has been diagnosed with congestive heart failure which is in early stages. His body is weakening and he doesn't walk anymore.

"For everyone's peace of mind, please don't give weight to reports from others who may pop in and visit Forry only periodically. I am at his side (along with caregiver Dolly, close pal Pam Keesey and Earl) every day from the moment he wakes up until the moment he goes to bed. All of us who are caring for him are trying to get him to hang around as long as possible without disobeying his wishes for no medical intervention."

While fans mounted vigil, Ray Bradbury proactively announced he would host Ackerman's 92nd birthday party at Mystery & Imagination Bookshop in Glendale on November 22. Though it was known Ackerman would be too ill to attend, Ackerman did enjoy the phone call he received from the party. (See John Hertz' report below.)

### *A Very Merry Unbirthday by John Hertz*

The birthday party for Forry Ackerman that Ray Bradbury hosted on Saturday, November 22nd, at Bookfellows (also called Mystery & Imagination bookshop) in Glendale was full of people, books, a cake, Ray, a theremin, and a giant card we all wrote good wishes on. Forry's 92nd is Monday, November 24th.

We sang Happy Birthday to Forry by phone, for which he thanked us from his home, the mini-Ackermansion. He is physically weak but his mind is sharp.

The cake was chocolate. It had a big photo of Forry in a blazer with his First Fandom badge, and a big photo-montage of monsters. Ray spoke eloquently. So did George Clayton Johnson and other friends.

That night was a small unbirthday party for another member of First Fandom, Len

Moffatt, who was only 85 on Thursday, November 20th. I asked Ray if he'd like to sign a card for Len, and he said certainly, so I went across the street and made one at a copy shop.

Len's wife June had contributed a 1972 photo of Len for the cover of APA-L 2271 last Thursday, so I used that. APA-L has been published every week for only 44 years.

The photo was from Westercon XXV where Len was Fan Guest of Honor. It shows Horrible Old Roy Tackett, Len as the clown Pike Pickens, Stan Woolston, and in back Dan Alderson. After Ray, I went over to Forry's so he could sign it. A nurse's aide let me in.

Forry said "I've always enjoyed you over the years," which I told him was mutual. I took the card to Len's party and confessed it was another ruse to dodge the no-presents rule. At his 80th it had been a balloon.

### *Len Moffatt in EQMM*

Len Moffatt's poem "What a Friend We Have in Sherlock" appeared in the November issue of *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine*. It's about Holmes's alleged relationship with Irene Adler.

The November issue is apparently off sale, but electronic texts are available from several online services.

### *Elliot Shorter Making Progress*

Elliot Shorter's condition has improved a lot since the last issue of *File 770*. In early May he'd just had a foot amputated and was suffering total kidney failure. He was comatose in an intensive care unit, and based on what doctors and nurses said at the time, friends feared he would not regain consciousness. How things have changed! Now he's alert, working hard during physical therapy, eating well – he even voted by mail in the presidential election.

When Mike Walsh and Elspeth Kovar visited Shorter on September 18 they discovered, "He's in good spirits. He's been hearing from folks he hasn't heard from in ... well, decades. High school friends even."

### *Fred Duarte Hospitalized*

Fred Duarte, suffering breathing problems, was taken off his return flight from the World Fantasy Con. Fred was hospitalized in Calgary, where he was diagnosed with double pneumonia, and type two diabetes.

### *Mike Glicksohn Surgery*

Mike Glicksohn's letter of comment in the July issue of the *NASFA Shuttle* revealed that on June 2 he had another cytoscopy, and was still awaiting the results. Then on June 4, doctors removed his gall bladder, a major surgery: "Spent four days in the hospital and apparently it takes six weeks for the nine-inch chest incision to heal up. I am coping."

## International Mystery Revives Investigation into Fans' Disappearance



(Above) **Linda Mayfield and John Sohus** in the 1980s. (Below) **"Clark Rockefeller"** in jail.

After Clark Rockefeller was arrested in July for abducting his 7-year-old daughter, authorities discovered he was an impostor with multiple identities. One of them, Christopher Chichester, has long been sought as a "person of interest" in the 1985 disappearance and apparent murder of LASFS members Linda Mayfield and her husband John Sohus. "Rockefeller's" identity ultimately proved to be Christian Karl Gerhartsreiter, born in West Germany in 1961.

At the time the couple went missing, Chichester was living in a converted garage on the Sohuses' property. He disappeared before investigators could locate him.

In 1994, workers digging a pool in the backyard of the home discovered human remains in three plastic bags, presumed to be those of John Sohus, although that has never been shown conclusively. Neither Linda Mayfield Sohus nor her remains have been located.

Linda Mayfield did fan art under the name "Cody." Perhaps the last person to hear from her in 1985 was an unnamed Northern California art collector. He told the Pasadena *Star News* that he placed a phone call to ask her about a painting he'd commissioned, probably just a few hours before she disappeared. The Pasadena *Star News* reported on August 16:

"She basically said, 'I'm sorry I didn't get back to you,'" the art connoisseur recalled. "Things are just kind of crazy here. My husband's gotten a job offer in New York and it looks like I'm going to have to move right away and I'm just running around like crazy." Linda told the collector that her husband had taken a classified job working on a govern-



ment satellite program, but couldn't say more and quickly hung up. And then the newlywed couple vanished.

The New York *Times* interviewed people about "Rockefeller" in the exclusive community where he had lived with his family:

"In the understated town of Cornish, N.H., where it is considered bad form to exhibit your wealth, the man calling himself Clark Rockefeller was driven around in an armored black Cadillac with bulletproof windows. He affected silk ascots and bragged that when it came to acquiring property, he could outbid anyone. He said that Helmut Kohl and Britney Spears were coming to dinner...."

"Among the autobiographical details he reportedly told various people at various times: his parents had been kidnapped in South America and he needed to pay ransom; he and his friends were "Star Trek" groupies who conversed in Klingon; a private chef made four-course meals for his dogs; and he became mute as a child for 10 years because he was distraught at the death of his parents in a car crash. (In truth, his mother is still

alive and his father died of natural causes a few years ago.)

Gerhartsreiter, aka Rockefeller, has been denied bail and will be in jail indefinitely. When his attorney asked Suffolk Superior Judge D. Lloyd Macdonald to lower the \$50 million bail set by another magistrate, the judge answered: "Before me is somebody who by his life appears to have demonstrated a capacity -- a very ingenious capacity -- to transform himself and to maneuver his way around this country and the world through deception and the exercise of obviously powerful intelligence."

Just before Labor Day weekend, with TV helicopters hovering overhead, authorities returned for an intensive search of the property where John Sohus and Linda Mayfield were living in 1985, a home then belonging to John's mother. Using cadaver-sniffing dogs and ground-penetrating radar, searchers commenced work on Friday, having waited until the start of the holiday weekend in an ill-fated attempt to minimize the disruption of life in the upscale San Marino neighborhood. No discoveries were announced.

LA County Sheriff's detectives' passion for solving the crime may be driven by a strange coincidence -- it happened in the Sheriff's old neighborhood. Sheriff Lee Baca recently described the 23-year-old missing persons case of John and Linda Sohus as "too important to go unsolved." Baca was living a block away from the Sohuses on Lorain Road at the time of the disappearance.

## Lasting Impressions: News from the World of Fanzines

### *Corflu Fifty Picks Curt Phillips*

Curt Phillips is the winner of the Corflu Fifty fan fund. The fund will allow Phillips to go Corflu Zed in Seattle next year.

Curt has an array of interests, the most dramatic being his participation in historical re-enactments.

The Corflu Fifty fund is an outgrowth of the one-shot funds to bring Bruce Gillespie and William Breiding to Corflu Titanium in 2004 and Harry Bell to Corflu Quire in 2006. Then Andrew Porter proposed making this a regular tradition, to be funded by a group of fans committed to donate \$25 dollars.

The Corflu Fifty supported Steve and Elaine Stiles' trip to Corflu Silver in Las Vegas this year. Randy Byers says the name Corflu Fifty reflects how many contributors they want to have, versus the 25 they already have. Interested fans can contact Rich Coad at richcoad@comcast.net

### *Corflu Zed*

Corflu Zed will be in Seattle over the March 13-15, 2009 weekend at the Hotel Deca. The hotel is in the University District. Randy Byers says it's "a lovely old art deco hotel that was built in 1931, around the same time that the first fanzines were being published. The consuite will be on the top floor of the building, with wonderful panoramic views of the city."

Corflu's first progress report, *AmaZed and CorfluZed #1*, is available at eFanzines. Along with all the crucial information about the con, it features an exhortation by John Hertz and a reprint of an article Wally Weber wrote in 1960.

Andy Hooper is running auctions on eBay

to raise money for the con. Says Byers, "He has many rare and fascinating items for sale, including books, fanzines, and magazines. Search for the character string 'Corflu Zed' on eBay to find these items. Any support would be greatly appreciated!"

Corflu Zed Membership rates are: Attending (includes banquet): \$65 US, £35 UK and European; Supporting (receives special publication): \$20 US, £10 UK.

US Mailing address: Corflu Zed, c/o S. Tompkins, P.O. Box 25075, Seattle, WA 98165. Checks payable to Denys Howard.

UK Mailing address: Post to Claire Brialey, 59 Shirley Rd., Croydon, Surrey, CR0 7ES. Checks payable to Claire Brialey.

Hotel Deca, 4507 Brooklyn Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98105. Room rates: \$129 (king/dbl), \$159 for Junior Suites. Mention Corflu 26 to get these rates. Reservations: 206-628-2391

### *Bangsund's Law*

Every time I leap into a Smofs list debate, or get into any kind of e-mail argument, I can count on making invisible typos that will erupt from the screen as if written in letters of fire the moment my message hits the list.

I just learned recently that a subset of this experience is so widespread it has inspired Muphry's Law, an adage that states that "if you write anything criticizing editing or proofreading, there will be a fault of some kind in what you have written."

Muphry's Law was invented by John Bangsund, the great Australian fan writer, in 1992. While it is easy to imagine Bangsund writing something of worldwide interest,

Muphry's Law implies John sometimes made copyediting mistakes — he's such a polished writer I find that almost beyond belief.

### *Nice Distinctions #17*

Arthur Hlavaty carries on *Nice Distinctions* #17 in the witty, intelligent tone that you go to fannish parties hoping to find. But parties are hit-and-miss affairs, while Hlavaty never disappoints.

Hlavaty is a skilled practitioner of "idea-tripping." Tom Digby's term for applying rigorous Campbellian logic to twist an idea in a fannishly amusing direction. Short examples are often the best, like this one in issue #17:

That would be a weird job: texting copy-editor. "Spell out 'you' again and u r fired." Always interesting are Hlavaty's verbal snapshots of the annual International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts. He communicates contagious enjoyment of everything from scholarly insights to new juxtapositions of quirky ideas. He even shares my fascination with Philip K. Dick's posthumous literary ascent. (Though he's unlikely to share my feeling that this is the mundane world's revenge on sf writers who took an optimistic view of the future.)

Hlavaty also makes many brief comments or entertaining connections from the political news of the day. I haven't found it necessary to dwell in Hlavaty's end of the political spectrum to enjoy his mind-stretching word-play: I expect those who do will find it all the more delicious.

You can find *Nice Distinctions* #17 on eFanzines.com.



## Taral Wins 2008 Rotsler Award

Toronto-area artist Taral Wayne has won the Rotsler Award, given annually for long-time artistic achievement in amateur publications of the science fiction community. Established in 1998, it carries an honorarium of US\$300.

The award will be formally announced on Saturday, November 29, 2008, at the Los Angeles local science fiction convention "Loscon", held every year over the U.S. Thanksgiving Day weekend.

Taral's work is by turns serious, sexy, and satirical, with a fluent line and strong composition. At home with space equipment and strange creatures, he was also drawing anthropomorphic animals long before most in North America had heard of anime or manga.

The Rotsler Award is sponsored by the Southern California Institute for Fan Interests, a non-profit corporation, which in 2006 hosted the 63rd World Science Fiction Convention. The award is named for the late Bill Rotsler, a talented and prolific artist over many years. Current judges are Mike Glyer, John Hertz, and Claire Brialey.

The 2008 Loscon [www.loscon.org] will be the 35th. An exhibit honoring Taral's work will be in the Art Show. For more about the Rotsler Award, visit [www.scifiinc.org/rotsler/](http://www.scifiinc.org/rotsler/).

Taral will be the Fan Guest of Honor at the 2009 Worldcon in Montreal.

# LA DOLCE VITA

## By TARAI

Living as a freelance artist is a satisfying life, full of self actualization and spiritual fulfillment.

Of course, you have to learn to do without the little things most people take for granted. Like clothes you haven't patched several times, and isn't several years behind the fashions. Like never seeing a movie until it's at Wal-Mart, in the \$5.98 bin, years after everyone else has seen it and stopped talking about it. Like eating at home every night of the year, and memorizing the instructions of KD dinner packages down to the last Biphenylate Phubitol preservative. Like taking aspirin instead of making an appointment with a dentist. Like disconnecting the phone when behind on your credit card payments, and get fed up with the recorded messages. Like getting only the two local channels and some fuzzy signals from PBS because you don't have cable.

You'll encounter mainly two reactions to your carefree lifestyle.

On the one hand people will envy your freedom and independence.

On the other, people who've heard a little too much from you about the price of that freedom and independence will tell you "get a job."

I think that's the true measure of the value of your art. When it comes to principle, art is priceless. But when the chips are down and you stray into dubious social theory by suggesting subsidies for the arts, or complain about the bourgeois taste of the public... in other words, when you ask most people to put money where their mouth is, the answer you get is you should find a *real* job. Why should you be spared the daily grind, they now ask? What makes you think talent, skill, and dedication make you better than other people, huh? Get a job, and if you have time afterward you can create masterpieces then.

Life as an artist is lonely at times. When your friends are at the Red Lobster, or have gone to see *Harry Potter* and *Masters of Wall Street*, you're at home feeling out of sorts. Actually, you're feeling short of funds, but that's not what you like saying, time after time, so you become inventive with excuses. When everyone you know is at a con having a good time, you go on the internet, hoping someone will send you e-mail telling you what a swell time they're having. Eventually



your friends assume you don't enjoy movies, or eating out, or hockey games, and stop asking you to come along. Then you start asking yourself if you ever really had any friends.

But you get used to that. In time you start making friends on television. They're there for you, any hour of the day. Just turn on the set. There's Wilma and Fred – they're usually home all day. You can always have a few laughs behind Archie Bunker's back. Want a night out with the boys, then why not drop in at Cheers? You can tune in on the zany crew at WKRP, or lend a helping hand at the 4077<sup>th</sup>. MASH. In the zone? Why not stay up late and hear a few cases on Night Court? Or if you're in the mood to stroll down memory lane, maybe Bogart will see the makings of a fine friendship in Claude Rains again tonight.

Of course, those are TV friends. They're not real. When the chips are down, where are they? Living it up with some other lonely soul, while you gaze in despair at the darkened tube, wishing you'd paid the cable bill instead of buying food for the cat. Fortunately, you're an artist – you can make up *real* friends. Spies, elves, superheroes, detectives, kings, princesses, jungle explorers,

movie stars, gods, warriors, millionaires, cops, cowboys, cavemen, talking cats, robots, aliens... anyone you like! I'm a very imaginative guy, and have any number of close, loving friends.

Still, there could be improvements in your relations with other people. The ones who have a pulse. For one thing, as Rodney Dangerfield said, you don't get no respect. A priest, a rabbi, and a minister have no job and no money either, but no one holds it against them. They have a calling. You're a bum. Unless of course you get famous and make a fortune. Then you're "my son the artist" or "my neighbor the artist". But unless you photograph naked men in leather halters, or carve polar bears during the long arctic nights, there's no hope of getting rich or famous. You may as well get used to the idea that your parents will go to their grave knowing you never made good in life.

The overwhelming sense of personal failure doesn't get much easier to bear when you learn of the rare artist who beats the odds. There is no probability at all that an artist the world has taken to its heart will produce work you would admire, or hang on your own wall. Far more likely that prestigious award, or \$20,000 grant, was given to no-talent jerk for pelting a barn door with eggs. Or maybe for exhibiting a set of cheap kitchenware nailed to a table top. Something you could do in your sleep if you had imagined anyone would call crap like that "art".

Meanwhile, what of *your* art? When you die, what happens to it? Should you will it to your hometown art museum? Will your heirs sell it to a major collector? Will \$80 coffee table books be published of your career? Don't be silly. It isn't as though you had dropped balloons of paint from a roof, or something gutsy and progressive like that – cartoon animals and drawings of space ships isn't Art. It's illustration, don't you know? Or worse, comic books. Whatever it was you wasted your life doing, odds on it will be thrown out by your family or widow. For that matter, can you give one good reason why the trash won't be where it belongs?

No... no I can't.

Yet, you know... For all that, as bad as it gets, and as heartbreaking as the inevitable end must be...

I can't imagine another life.



**Diana Glycer and Wil Vaus** promote their books to an enthusiastic audience of C.S. Lewis fans, including a group of high school students in Narnian costumes.

### *Diana Speaks at Oxbridge 2008*

Diana flew to England in late July to participate in “Oxbridge 2008.” Every three years, the C. S. Lewis Foundation takes a group to spend a week at Oxford and a week at Cambridge hearing from Christian thinkers about a variety of topics, viewed through the prism of C. S. Lewis’s writing. Diana accepted their invitation to speak at a plenary session and lead two workshops, from July 28 to August 8.

Diana’s plenary address titled “C.S. Lewis and the Algebra of Friendship” explored Lewis’s use of Charles Lamb’s idea that our ability to know people is multiplied by mutual friendships.

Oxbridge featured many acclaimed speakers. The other morning plenary speaker on the day Diana spoke was Francis Collins, leader of the Human Genome Project. Some others on the schedule were authors Philip Yancey and Michael Ward (*Planet Narnia*).

Diana loved having another chance to visit the town that’s central to the history of the Inklings. She said in an e-mail: “Oxford! What can I say about this city! The name of every street and pub and college and building is like an old friend. We had dinner at the Bird and Baby the first night, and I literally pounded the brick wall with my hand to convince myself that I wasn’t dreaming....”

“We took a long tour of the Kilns and surrounding ponds and woods. I sat in the bench where Lewis and Tolkien sat to talk and watch the water. There were meetings in the afternoon, and then in the evening we had a lovely service of worship in the church where Lewis preached his famous sermon, ‘The Weight of Glory.’ Awe Inspiring.”

Earlier in July, Diana appeared on-camera at the request of film-makers who are preparing extra feature material for an educational

edition of the *Prince Caspian* DVD, aimed at teachers who want to use the movie in the classroom. They interviewed her for two hours, and Diana found things going so well that at times the crew forgot the script and became totally caught up in what they were talking about. The camera man and make-up artist told her they wanted to go back to school because it was all so interesting.

In August, the Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies was presented to *The Company They Keep: C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien as Writers in Community* by Diana Pavlac Glycer; appendix by David Bratman, at Mythcon 39 in Connecticut. It is the highest distinction given in that field of study.

The book is enjoying enough success that Kent State University Press issued a paperback edition in October. Diana launched the paperback at a special event at Mystery and Imagination Bookstore in Glendale, CA, teaming up with Wil Vaus (*The Professor of Narnia*) for a Lewis-themed evening. Over 40 Lewis enthusiasts came out, some in full Narnian costume.

### *Selling Like Hotcakes*

Brandon Sanderson’s *The Hero of the Ages* (volume three of his Mistborn trilogy), published on October 14, was the first book edited by Moshe Feder to reach the New York Times bestseller list, debuting at #21.

### *Proulx and Hopkinson Win Sunburst Awards*

The Sunburst Awards for Canadian Literature of the Fantastic were won by “Anthem of a Reluctant Prophet” by Joanne Proulx and “The New Moon’s Arms” by Nalo Hopkinson. This was Hopkinson’s second win; she also won a Sunburst Award in 2003.

Proulx’s *Sunburst* is the first winner in the new separate category for young adult speculative fiction.

### *Connie Willis’ Turn at “A Dozen on Denver”*

“New Hat” is Connie Willis’s entry in the “Dozen on Denver” series running in the *Rocky Mountain News*:

“Of course not,” Kane had said impatiently. “Cowboys and Indians were only in the old days. It’s 1924. Denver’s a modern metropolis now.”

Eleven of the stories were commissioned by the paper from Willis, and other established writers, while the twelfth will be written by the winner of a contest, and will depict Denver of the future. The authors’ stories cover the period from the 1860s to the present, and were chosen to reveal something about the forces that made the city what it is today. Speaking of irony, what should be said about an editor who wants to choose a winning story according to its ability to “tell us what life in the Denver of tomorrow might be like” but assigns Connie Willis to write about the 1920s?

An interview accompanied her story:

“[Q:]Your heroine thinks Denver looks like Chicago, rather than the Wild West she imagined. Do you think even modern people have a misconception of Denver in the ’20s?”

“[A:] I absolutely do. I have experienced this with some of my New York friends who are always asking me bizarre questions about what it’s like to live in the West. One of my fellow writers came out, bought herself a pink Stetson - which no one in the history of the world has worn - and then proceeded to say, ‘Head ‘em up, move ‘em out!’ every time we needed to go someplace.”





## OBITUARIES



### Jack Speer

Jack Speer, member of First Fandom and famed author of the *Fancylopedia*, passed away June 28 at the age of 87.

The *Fancylopedia* formalized definitions for hundreds of terms in use by fans. It first appeared in 1944.

Prior to that, Speer wrote the first history of science fiction fandom, called *Up To Now*, in 1939. It had been very hard to find a copy of *Up To Now* until recently, when Robert Lichtman recreated it as a PDF edition and posted it at eFanzines. It was in this zine Speer originated the idea of Numbered Fandoms, fanhistorical epochs, which has occupied many a fan's idle hours ever since.

Speer wrote the first-ever mailing comment in response to an early distribution of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. Mailing comments grew into a genre of cross-discussion that is carried on today on Internet message boards. Speer also innovated several indispensable bits of faanish typography, including the quasi-quote mark and the interlineation. He contributed to faanish cosmology by inventing FooFoo, the ghod of

mimeography, fearsome foe of Ghu.

According to Don Fitch, Speer was diagnosed as terminal some weeks prior to his death. Still, Jack had managed to attend Corflu Silver in April, making his way around with the aid of a portable oxygen supply, attentive to everything going on. The con's classic moment was when fellow eo-fan Art Widner serenaded Jack with the first-ever filksong, written by Jack himself.

Although the term "filksong" had yet to be invented, several of these songs were sung at the 1940 Worldcon. Jack created them by setting new lyrics with a science fictional theme to familiar tunes. A snippet of one goes:

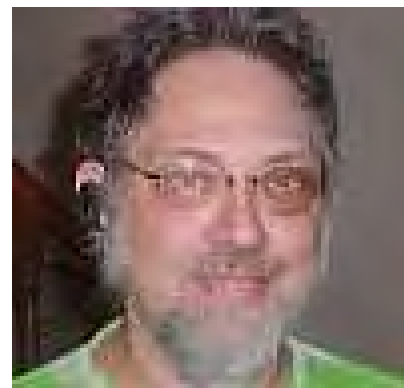
*We'll build a tempo-ship  
And we'll take a little trip,  
And watch a million years go by.*

In 1995, Speer received the First Fandom Hall of Fame Award. In 2004, he was Fan Guest of Honor at Noreascon 4. His collection, *Fancestral Voices* was published by NESFA Press for the occasion.

Having spent decades thinking of Speer as a distinguished founding father of fandom, as he certainly was, I've tended to overlook that he was having a helluva lot of fun while making history. This point is brought home by Harry Warner's anecdote about Speer at the 1947 Worldcon in *All Our Yesterdays*:

"From time to time that Saturday night, the happy fans were vaguely aware of the existence of loud, intermittent noises. Several Philadelphians explained them away as a local phenomenon that occurred when sewer gas caused manhole lids to lift violently in a sort of municipal burping. However, the real facts were not at all like that. During a late drinking session...Speer had suddenly remembered the existence of fireworks in the hip pocket of the Quintessence of FooFoo, his current auto.... Several roman candles later, policemen in a squad car gave [Speer and other fans] a warning about discharging fireworks within the city limits... [Afterwards], Speer and Davis seem to have taken up strategic posts on upper fire escapes [of the con hotel]... Firecrackers and skyrockets were alternated to provide variety... When the

police returned... they paid \$5.00 apiece at the 21<sup>st</sup> District Station for disturbing the peace. The investment was at least partly justified because the pyrotechnics had helped Willy Ley find his way to the hotel."



### Bruce Dane

Bruce Dane died early in the morning of July 12. He had been hospitalized since June 2 due to injuries sustained in a fall. He leaves behind his daughters, Meera, Kelly, Rachel, Kyria, and Samantha; his brother Doug Pintar; and his separated wife, Michelle.

David Klaus shared this memory of Bruce Dane: "Bruce's ability with computers amazed me. I remember crashing on his couch in Sherman Oaks in the early '80s and awakening to see him typing away, programming for a client directly in hexadecimal machine code, not in any structured language. After I picked up my jaw from where it had dropped, he said it was easier and faster for him than using a higher language and compiling it later, which caused me to have to pick up my jaw again."

A benefit concert for Dane scheduled before his death went ahead anyway on July 18. "The concert was a success," Michelle Dane wrote afterwards. "We got enough money to help pay for some of the final expenses." The concert was headlined by Boomer Box, a band in which Bruce had played the 12-string guitar.

### Mike Hall

Michael Hall died of a heart attack on August 1, in Fort McMurray, Alberta.

Randy Reichardt, a pillar of Decadent Winnipeg Fandom in the mid-1970s, mourned the passing of this fellow DWF member:

"Michael Hall had been active in fandom from the late 1970s until at least the late 1980s or so, published extensively and participated in conventions in western Canada, including NonCon in Edmonton. He moved from Winnipeg to Edmonton in 1979, and to Fort McMurray AB in 1994. He had been Managing Editor of *Fort McMurray Today*, the local newspaper there, since 2004.

"His fanzines included *Schmagg*, *Laid*,

*New Wave Video Snacks*, *Schmagg Monthly*, and *Excuses, Excuses*. He was also one of the founding editors of *The Monthly Monthly*, which appeared in twelve monthly issues from Oct 1979-Sept 1980, before it became *The Bimonthly Monthly* for two more issues (v.3 n.1 Oct 1980-v.3 n.2 Dec 1980/Jan 1981), then ceased publication.

"Mike maintained a significant collection of books, fanzines and CDs. The University of Alberta Libraries has accepted these in donation from his partner, Mary, and we will be processing and adding these items to our collection in the future. Among his collection were 35 boxes of fanzines.

"Mike was a good friend to myself, Robert Runté and many others. He is already sadly missed."

Robert Runté adds that Hall, assisted by Keith Fenske and possibly others, developed and published a massive, 198-page bibliography of SF fanzines. Graeme Spencer remembers that it "was widely available in dealers rooms of Canadian cons circa 1985/1986. International in scope."

### Chris Cooper

Popular British fan Chris Cooper died July 4. According to *Ansible*, Cooper had been in ICU at a London hospital for the two previous weeks, comatose and on a ventilator, but doctors were uncertain why he had suddenly collapsed. Although Cooper had been fighting a major illness for over a year, reportedly that was not considered the direct cause of his final hospitalization.

Chris, a very tall fan (6' 11") sometimes referred to as the Jolly Green Giant, was an internationally-known sf convention runner who went to his first convention in 1977. Over the years he attended over 100 cons in 8 countries, including 18 in North America. In 2007, he worked on the Japanese Worldcon.

Chris once said of himself, "My real interests are SF, beer, malt whisky, fireworks (and the organisation of cons and beer festivals) but mostly I have to work as a Systems Programmer." I remember him as a friendly and good-humored fellow, and am sorry I will not see him again.

### Roberta "Bert" Carlson

Roberta "Bert" Carlson, a Washington state fan, died the morning of July 2 after a Saturn SUV she was driving overturned. Carlson and her four passengers were on their way to the Las Vegas Westercon. The rollover occurred between Ely and Wells on U.S. 93 in east-central Nevada, closing the highway for about three hours.

Jon Foster, William M. Boyde, and Heather M. Newman suffered minor injuries. Nick Navota suffered major trauma to left

side and had surgery to reconnect fingers to one hand.

"Bert" Carlson was treasurer of the Seattle 2011 Worldcon bid, a Rustycon 26 Board Member, and a popular volunteer at Northwest science fiction conventions including OryCon.

### Clive Newall

Clive Newall, Melbourne fan and ANZAPA contributor, passed away from idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis on October 1. He is survived by his wife LynC and children Roger and Estelle.

*Australian SF Bullshead #79* explained, "Although drugs slowed the disease's progress for over two years, the only solution was a double lung transplant. However, Clive's condition deteriorated to the point where his doctors did not think he would survive an operation."

Janice Gelb adds, "A memorial service was held in Melbourne on October 6 and was attended by many local fans; more from around the world sent tributes."



### George Proctor

George Proctor, a cherished figure in Texas' science fiction community, died August 3. An active fanzine editor in the early 1970s, the best known of his several titles was *Citadel*. Proctor wrote sf professionally, and also edited the *Science Fiction Hall of Fame, Volume III* with Arthur C. Clarke.

At the time of his death, he was an instructor in the Communications department at the University of Texas at Arlington.

Proctor was among the first fans who traded zines with me. Many years later at an

AggieCon I had the particular pleasure of sitting at a table in the Con Suite with Proctor, Joe Lansdale and a few other Texas writers, and sharing an extended conversation with them.

### Joanie Winston

Joanie Winston, 77, an organizer of the original Star Trek conventions of the early 1970s, died September 11 after several months in an assisted living center. I remember her from the 1975 NASFiC, and a couple other cons of that era.

Winston contributed a chapter on the first Star Trek Convention in New York to Jacqueline Lichtenberg and Sondra Marshak's *Star Trek Lives!* She eventually wrote an entire book on the subject, *The Making Of The Trek Conventions: Or, How To Throw A Party For 12,000 Of Your Most Intimate Friends*.

### Don LaFontaine

Don LaFontaine, the prolific voice artist known for narrating movie trailers, died September 1. He originated the movie trailer catch-phrase, "In a world where..." He completely dominated the voiceover industry, and made more than 5,000 trailers in his 33-year career.

When I took a voice-over class a few years ago he was held up as the gold standard, living the life everyone aspired to, picked up by limo and delivered from studio to studio to narrate trailers and commercials throughout the day.

That, in any case, was the legend. Computer technology had made such strides that for the last few years LaFontaine could do a lot of his work in his home studio.

LaFontaine worked constantly, in contrast to voice-over students scuffling to land any kind of low-paying radio commercial. There is so much competition in Hollywood that working at all is a degree of success in and of itself. Our instructor had credits, which set her above the wanna-bes — it didn't matter in the least if the work was announcing weekly sales for Piggly Wiggly.

I have a nice enough voice, but as the late LaFontaine said, it's the reading, the interpretation, that really counts. No matter how much passion I put into reading copy about ceiling fans, I always seemed to sound like Worf on ST:TNG.

My only quasi-professional voice work has been recording the caller menu for our local office phone system. Unfortunately, I'm well into the last seconds of my 15 minutes of fame. Our office is replacing its phone system with a digital phone network that runs off a server in Fresno and uses AT&T's canned vocals. All glory is fleeting.

## Denvention 3 Report by Mike Glycer



(L) *Jan Howard Finder*; (M) *Regina Reynante, Joyce Scrivner, Mike Glycer*; (R) *Diana and David Thayer*.

Diana and I have attended Worldcons together many times, but our itinerary for Denvention 3 was unlike any of the others. Diana flew in from England after a two week speaking trip. I left from a Southern California airport after dropping off Sierra with friends. We didn't even arrive until the third day of the con. The Friday program schedule had almost ended by the time we met at the Denver Hyatt Regency. We were left with a bare sliver of time to see the con, meet up with friends, and go together to the Hugo ceremony the next night.

Waiting for Friday to come, I trawled the

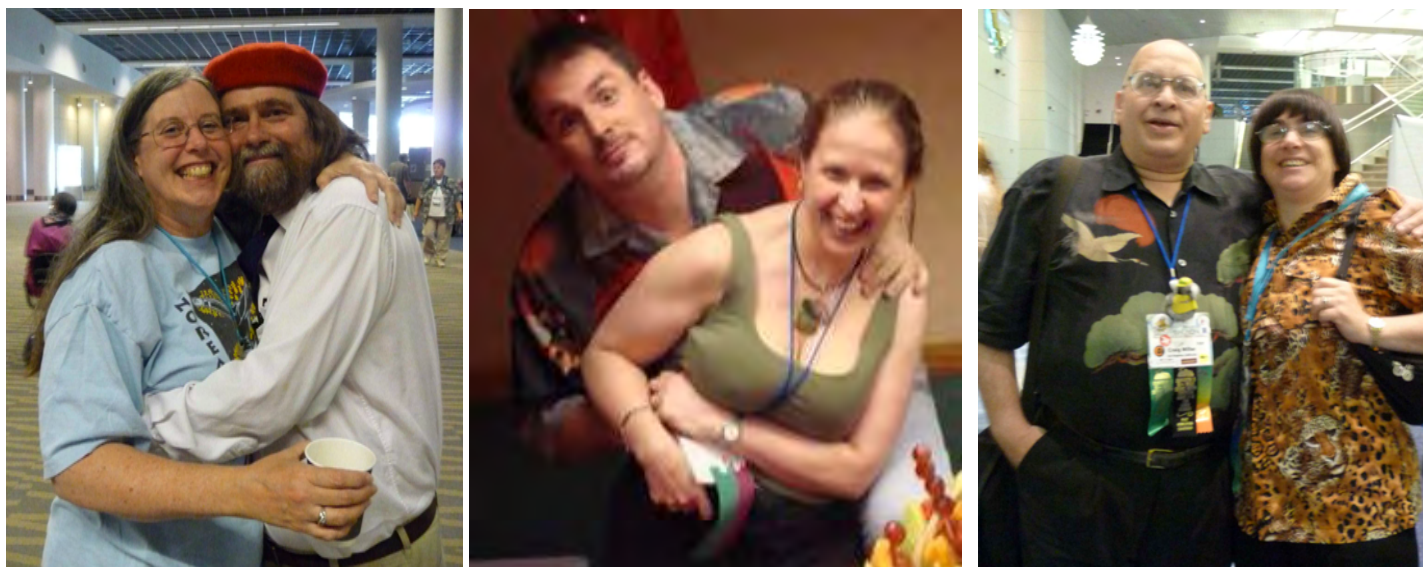
Internet for any crumb of information about the con. The crew at *Fast Forward: Contemporary Science Fiction* aired a video blog about Denvention's first day, mixing brief interviews with fans like Michael Walsh and Phil Foglio, excerpts from Opening Ceremonies and shots of a Registration line already made notorious by Cheryl Morgan's blog.

Tor.com was only a couple months old at that time. Since they had posted more than 40 stories about the San Diego Comic-Con, I was sure a flood of Worldcon news would begin at any moment. It never did. They never promised it would, honestly.

**In Colorado at Last:** When Diana and I connected on Friday, she knew I would have a better time if we promptly went over to the convention center and registered: I'd feel "real" then.

Along the way we met Keith Kato, who said he's still thinking about writing a 34-year retrospective of his chili parties. I'd love to publish that. We said hello to John Novak, who told us he's now happily retired. Andrew Dyer also greeted us with word that he'd retired, but added he has since found work he really cares about doing.

Diana hailed a couple she knew, recently



**Love is in the Air** (L-R) *Jaice and Rick Foss*; *Dave McCarty and Helen Montgomery*; *Craig Miller and Genny Dazzo*.



**After the fanzine panel:** Chris Garcia, (?), Milt Stevens, Jeanne Mealy, Michelle Zellich, Tom Feller, Roger Sims, Guy H. Lillian III, Joseph T. Major, Lisa Major, Mike Kennedy, Evelyn Leeper, Mike Glycer, R-Laurraine Tutihasi, Mark Leeper, Andrew Porter, Cathy Palmer-Lister.

engaged. As we spoke with them Scott Beckstead came up and wished the prospective groom “Good Luck” – and the groom immediately pointed out that Scott hadn’t said “Congratulations.”

If avoiding Worldcon registration lines is a really high priority for you, I recommend registering around dinnertime on the convention’s third day. Linda Ross-Mansfield at Registration gave immediate and undivided attention to our membership issues – we were, after all, her only customers. While she figured out what we owed, we greeted Joyce

Scrivner and other friends.

**Saturday:** The next morning on our way back to the convention center on Saturday, Diana and I met Jan Howard Finder. I asked if he knew he’d been quoted in a recent *Financial Times* column. Martin Morse Wooster had sent me the clipping. Wombat said it was about his 2004 trip to visit *Lord of the Rings* locations in New Zealand. He wants to go back when they film *The Hobbit*, and toward that end had applied to work as a production assistant to Benecio Del Toro.

Mary Kay Kare caught up to us and

handed off our Hugo packets. We got nominee pins – a flat design, nice looking, silver rocket on a black field. I attached mine to my name badge. People speculated whether this was likely to bother Mike Resnick, because it wouldn’t match all the rocket-shaped pins on his bandolier. For years such pins were obtained through Russian fans. I guess it’s not something you find in the Oriental Trading Co. catalog.

Denvention did a fine job with publications. The pocket program was great. The Souvenir Book was beautifully designed.

(Left) Tom Whitmore; (Middle) John Mansfield; (Right) The big blue bear peeks through the windows of the Colorado Convention Center and wonders if there are any tasty fans attending Denvention 3.



Much more so than other years, walking at this Worldcon really confronted me with my physical limitations. I've been to Denver quite often in recent years on work assignments, and handled it okay despite my lack of fitness. In contrast, as I walked around Denvention I wanted to crack a bottle of oxygen every 500 feet. I felt like I was in the worst shape of my life.

Maybe that was a reason I expected to see a lot more fans riding electric carts: I noticed very few. They've become commonplace at Worldcons, where less mobile fans use them to get around huge convention centers. Rather like the larger carts carrying passengers at the airport, it takes only two or three beeping past to make you think you've seen a lot of them. But seeing none at all in the prairie-sized corridor that ran the length of the Colorado Convention Center I wondered why? Did a lot of people who use these carts just stay home, perhaps unable to handle the altitude?

Exhaustion was the reason I missed the post-Hugos nominees party in the Sheraton, several blocks from the convention center. Consequently, Diana didn't get her Hugo nominee souvenir, which this year was really nice – the Anticipation committee gave away a combination pen and USB storage drive. I felt terribly guilty. I went around Sunday finding 2009 committee members I could beg for the favor of sending one of the extras to Diana. One was mailed to her later, and I was delighted.

When Diana and I went upstairs to the Exhibits and Dealers Room, I rested again, taking a seat while Diana browsed the wares.

John Mansfield stopped and filled me in about the Aurora Awards, having seen what Taral said about them in the previous *File 770*. They'd been announced at the Key-Con/Convention in Winnipeg, John's home town. He felt that those who run the Auroras had rebuffed the local concom's attempts to work with them on the ceremony.

My hearing, problematic for years, was another frustrating limitation at this Worldcon. Even under the best conditions, where program participants used the microphone faithfully, and I sat lined up with the loudspeaker, their discussions still sounded like indecipherable mumbling. This is exasperating for someone like me who makes it a priority to report on the panel programming.

That influenced my decision on Saturday afternoon to look for quiet program with a cozy audience. I stepped into the room where Mark Olson was raining green-foiled Andes Mints on a small audience of fans playing "Trivia for Chocolate." Steven Silver and Jim Mann were the other quiz masters.

At first I sat behind David Goldfarb. The scouting report on David Goldfarb expressed in baseball terms would be: great bat, bad glove. He knows, by a conservative estimate,

well, everything. David's only weakness is fielding. If he actually had to catch the chocolate the competition might be closer.

I spent some time watching David's winnings bounce past me, til they asked a question that I should have gotten – seeing that I was the answer. We all realized how little of the proceedings I was hearing and I moved to the front row, to the seat nearest Tom Galloway that was not already occupied by his own hoard of chocolate. After that my main handicap was ignorance, but that's when I scored my two pieces. Knowing Mack Reynolds wrote "Adventure of the Extraterrestrial" was worth one Tim-Tam, a chocolate-dipped biscuit imported from Australia.

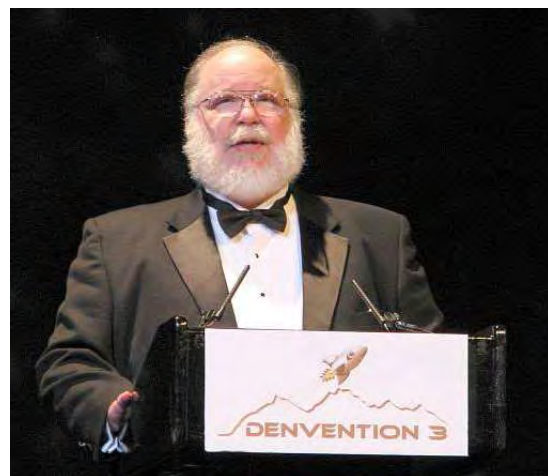
Marty Massoglia arrived halfway through the program and from then on scored heavily. Ah, the golden memories of once upon a time when Marty, Bruce Pelz and I entered a team trivia competition as the "LA Smog" and did so well. What decade was that? Hm, another piece of trivia I'm forgetting.

I had much better success tracking at the fanzine panel -- I never have any trouble hearing Guy H. Lillian III loud and clear. His contribution essentially was a live version of what he does in *The Zine Dump*, sifting through the pile of paperzines he'd brought and giving listeners some reason to love every one of them. Also on the panel were Jeanne Mealy, Evelyn Leeper and Joseph Major. Patricia Rogers was in the audience and I was able to meet her for the first time. Diana got everyone to pose for a group photo as they headed off to lunch.

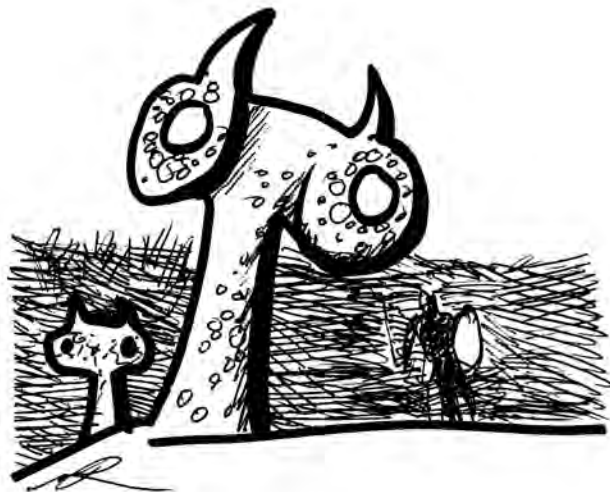
Maybe that was compensation for missing another ex-Worldcon-chairman's photo op, which evidently took place Saturday morning about a hundred yards or so away from me at precisely the moment I was in a committee office asking when it would be. The less said about that experience, the better.

**Sunday.** Glenn Glazer and Allison Hershey, handling the San Jose Westercon bid table, greeted me by saying they had liked John Hertz's "Wedcon" report in *File 770* about their wedding ceremony. I was glad he'd written it.

Don Ayres told me his hotel reservation problems had been solved at the cost of having to move every



(Top) Chair Kent Bloom; (Middle) John Hertz presenting the Big Heart Award; (Bottom) Laurie Mann, Gay Ellen Dennett and Mary Kay Kare, the Hugo Administrator.



single day. He was booked into the Curtis that night, and was looking forward to seeing its pop-culture-themed décor (such as the floor where *The Shining's* Jack Nicholson leers from a poster on the wall.) Even Don's trip to the airport had been under a literal cloud: he was caught in a thunderstorm trying to reach a covered bus stop.

Sunday night's "Former Worldcon Chair Party" was a blast for all the usual reasons. The food and wine was good, but I'd say the cold bottled water probably went as fast as anything -- so much for the legend of hard-drinking smofs. I went around comparing opinions about Denvention with Cheryl Morgan, Alan Stewart, Roger Sims, Elayne Pelz, Christian McGuire and Joe Siclari. I got to see a few fans for the first time who'd been on site for days, like Kevin Standlee. And, most interestingly, I met Erle Korshak for the first time, a well known fan and one of the very few surviving members of the first Worldcon in 1939. (Two of the several others are LA locals Forry Ackerman and Ray Bradbury.)

And then the curtain came down on my short but intense 2008 Worldcon experience.

### 2010 Worldcon Site Selection Result

Melbourne, Australia did run unopposed for the 2010 Worldcon, right? Or was that very fact the reason so many fans felt at liberty to shower their votes on assorted joke bids and outright shows of indifference? Australia captured a first-round majority with 658 votes, but a whopping 170 ballots went elsewhere. Denvention's daily newzine published the following breakdown:

Australia, 658; No preference, 32; None of the above, 19; Peggy Rae's House, 39; Xerps, 58; Minneapolis in '73, 4; Liechtenstein, 2; Other, 14 (Receiving one vote each were: Casa De Fruta; Columbus 2008; Kansas City; Kodacon; Miles Boss's House;

Monkey's Eyebrow, Ky.; No Dams; Rochester; Perth, WA, Australia; St. Pierre D Michilon Island; Southgate; Spuzzum, B.C.; Sunnydale, Calif.; and Takoma Park, Md.) Total ballots, 826.

Aussiecon Four will take place in Melbourne from September 2-6, 2010. The guests of honor will be Kim Stanley Robinson, Robin Johnson, and Shaun Tan. Perry Middlemiss and Rose Mitchell are Co-Chairs.

### Chicago in 2012 Hits Campaign Trail

The Chicago in 2012 Worldcon bid was officially launched at Denvention 3. The bid's leadership includes Dave McCarty (Chairman), Helen Montgomery (Secretary), and Tom Veal (Treasurer).

Those who believe nothing exists until it hits the internet can also consider the official launch to have happened that weekend. There's now a well-designed bid website, a



**Chicon IV (1982) Hugo**, made with transparent Lucite.

Chicago in 2012 LiveJournal community, and a Facebook page.

The website indicates there eventually will be available for download copies of the souvenir pulp magazines the bid is creating and giving to \$20 presupporting members. Fred Pohl wrote the story for the premiere issue.

### New Best Graphic Story Hugo Will Be Given in 2009

Anticipation, the 2009 Worldcon, has announced it will exercise its right to add a one-time Special Hugo category by awarding a Best Graphic Story Hugo. This will allow the category, added by a vote at Denvention 3, to take effect earlier than if it had to wait on the required ratification at next year's Business Meeting.

"Best Graphic Story," will cover any science fiction or fantasy narrative in graphic form appearing for the first time in 2008.

Anticipation will take place in Montréal, Québec, Canada from August 6-10, 2009.

### Hugos on the Record

Thanks to arrangements made by Steven Silver, the official Hugo Awards website now has a photo of the 1982 Hugo filling the page instead of the little red "x" that's been heroically performing that duty. The Chicago Worldcons of 1982 and 1991 used Lucite Hugo rockets instead of the more familiar chrome-plated rockets produced by Peter Weston. When there was a raised-pinky objection on the Smofs list to calling these "plastic" Hugos, Dave Locke blinded them with science: "I dunno what they were, but Lucite is defined as a transparent thermoplastic acrylic resin. Maybe I'm wrong, but that sounds like one of the many sins below the 'plastic' umbrella."

All this talk about historic Hugos prompted Taral Wayne to claim his share of the credit for the 1978 Hugo trophy:

"I was downloading photos of the Hugo awards and noticed that the credit line for the 1978 Phoenix Worldcon was blank. I don't know who designed the base per se... What I can say now is that the art on the engraved plaque on the base is a piece of art of mine. It was also used as a logo for the con, and put to various other uses. I don't have one of the Hugos of course, but received a copy of the engraving anyway."

### 2009 WFC Changes Dates

The 2009 World Fantasy Con will be held October 29-November 1 instead of the following weekend, as originally announced. The hotel asked the committee to move to resolve an accidental double-booking. One advantage of the change is that it restores WFC to the Halloween weekend.



# How to Present a Hugo

by  
**Christopher J.  
Garcia**

I perform a lot of weddings. It's a lot of fun, the engaged couple, the families, the friends, the reception, the food, the dancing. It's enough to bring even the worst situations and make them better. In fact, the day after my father died I was performing a wedding and it lifted my spirits so much that I was laughing and smiling the entire day. That's the power of a wedding. But there is also terror. If you mess up, you've ruined what may well be the most important day of two people's lives. No one is there to see you, they're there to see the marriage and you're just the one who is making it all nice and legal. You've got the pressure on you to do it right and in the end, no one will really care what you did right, but will villainize you if you got the slightest thing wrong.

And presenting the Hugo is much the same.

It's a moment of utter joy. You walk in front of much of the WorldCon membership, shine for a brief second when you introduce yourself or your cause, and then you make someone's year by announcing their name and giving them the trophy that says that they're the Best \_\_\_\_ in the Fannish World. How cool is that? Of course, the folks out in that audience aren't interested in your presentation, they just care about the winner...unless you're Robert Silverberg or Connie Willis. In that case, they hang on every word. They don't care about your talk, just what the winner says and how he says it. It's all about keeping from messing up, because you'll hear about it for the rest of your fannish life if you mess up, and you'll be lucky if two people come up to you after and say you did a great job. And yet, it's still a great gig to land. And here is my advice to you on How to Present a Hugo Award.

Let us start with getting to be the one who presents the Hugo. That's really the rough part. You've gotta have a good reason to get to present one. The best way to start is to be one of the WorldCon Guests of Honor. That requires years and years of awesomeness. Chairing a WorldCon, winning a few Hugos, writing dozens of amazing books, doing incredible amounts of incredible art, maybe being a star of stage, screen or telepictures. Those are all ways of becoming a Guest of Honor. You might be one of those folks who manages to do a ton of Masquerades and other presenting-type gigs and build a long reputation. That might get you the roll of Toastmaster, and that's the guy who'll do the over-all announcing, provide the framework for the ceremony, but might also be asked to present one. Of course, you could also just be Robert Silverberg or Connie Willis. Then you'll always be asked to present one! Since, at most, five or six of us might be Robert Silverberg or Connie Willis, I won't present that as a genuine method for getting to pre-

sent a Hugo.

Of course, there is the way that I got to present one: winning a Fan Fund. I won TAFF (Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund, also known as Teh Awesum Fan Fund to the Cool Kids) and they asked me and the DUFF winners (Steve and Sue Francis) to each present one award. Winning the Fan Funds is kinda hard, but it can be done. If you've done years of Awesome, you can run and might well be elected. Or you can be a loud mad man who walks around with a big sign and does a massive number of fanzines in support and win that way too. That's what I did and it worked, though your mileage may vary. Do any of that and you've got a shot, most years to present.

OK, you've managed to pull the perfect snowjob and now you're on the schedule. You're presenting a Hugo Award! Congrats, old chum! Now you get to deal with the hard stuff! How, for instance, are you going to make sure that everyone shows up to see your presentation? Well, a lot of folks are going to come no matter who is presenting, but you need to make sure your friends are there. Blog about it, write to folks and tell them, make sure you use phrases like 'Oh, that's cool. Did you hear I'm presenting a Hugo?' or maybe "I sure am tired. I need to be well-rested to present that Hugo." All of these things will help you gather a crowd of folks who will give you support and make it easier to do the rest.

OK, you've got your support network set up and now it's time to get yourself ready. First, make sure you're going to be at WorldCon. This can be difficult if it's in Japan or Australia or South Africa (and it would be so cool to have a South African WorldCon, wouldn't it?) and you gotta make sure they don't schedule you against the Hugo ceremony. Don't laugh, but it's happened before. You've got yourself a slot, you've got yourself there and you've made sure nothing will stand in the way. Now you must consider what you're gonna wear. In 2008, Rusty Hevelin, the long-standing fan who was awesome for more than 70 years before he presented a Hugo, wore a powder blue tuxedo with ruffles that made him look like a stud and a half! Robert Silverberg always wears suits so fine they'd pass through cheesecloth. Me? I went the way of memorability.

I bought a jacket at JC Penny's for 30 bucks. It was kinda like the jacket worn by David Tennant on the current series of Dr. Who. That's the base, really. Then, I had to choose a shirt. I knew I was expected to wear a tie, and that I was expected to stand in the hot lights. Now, folks who know me know that I often sweat like a Olympic marathon hurdler, so I can't really wear button-up shirts too often. I also knew I needed that irrational good luck charm that only a long-owned and

loved t-shirt can represent. I chose my Fred Flintone shirt, the orange one with the blue tie in the front. Of course, technically it's an cravat, but the idea is the same. So I had my jacket and my shirt, but there was another element. To have some sort of signature would be nice. Leigh Ann Hildebrand knit a lovely and almost maddeningly accurate 12th Season Dr. Who scarf for auction by TAFF. Since there wasn't going to be a TAFF auction at Denvention, I told her to bring it and we'd start to create buzz around it by having folks take their photos with it. I think hit on something: what would happen if I wore it on the stage of the Hugos? Of course, it would be hot, but it would also allow us to pimp it harder and draw more money when we finally auction it off at Anticipation in 2009.

So, I carried it with me until it was time to go on stage, when I wrapped it around me. The idea of using a memorable outfit to make sure folks recognize you is a decent idea.

OK, you're dressed and you're there. The day of, you have to go and walk through things. The odds are, you'll get a series of instructions from a series of different people. I got a whole bunch of instructions and they changed a couple of times while we were going on. The easiest way to think of things is that the last thing you hear is the right one. In my case, it was just remembering that my man Ian Stockdale was gonna come and fetch me when it was time to present and he gave me a couple of instructions. Then, when I got to the holding area, waiting to go on the stage, I got another set of instructions from my escort. That was the last of the instructions and I followed those when I went out.

You'll be invited to the Hugo Pre-reception. That's an awesome time. There'll be authors who you love who will be back there and you'll get a chance to talk to them. I had several authors take their photos in the Scarf and I chatted up a couple of the great writers and artists. One of them had even heard of my fanzine! Shocking! You should make sure you get your share of the free eats and drinks, but don't take too much in the way of booze. Slurring out on stage is a terrible thing...at least if you want to be invited back. There was a lovely cheese tray at the reception I attended. Take all you want, but eat all you take. That's the key.

Now, when you're backstage, you might get a chance to see the Hugo Awards with the plates already on. In essence, you might know who's gonna win before the rest of the world. Now, you need to remember that you can't go and make a phone call to someone who'll blab it about, nor can you blog it. I



**Present and Accounted For:** Chris Garcia, flanked by Tom Whitmore and Linda Wenzelburger.

managed to see that John Scalzi was going to win the Best Fan Writer Hugo a full two minutes before they announced it and I was tempted to call everyone I knew. You must resist this stinging sensation and keep your mouth and Blackberrys shut.

Now, you'll probably find at least some terror as you're standing in the back, waiting to go out. That's natural. Try and find a way to use it. I folded a piece of paper over and over again. When I took it off back in the hotel room that night, I discovered I had inadvertently folded an origami version of the Last Supper. I would recommend not throwing up. That can lead to problems.

OK, the moment when you're going to be going out is the toughest. You've gotta make

### Guy Lillian III recommends zines.



sure that you're ready to face the lights, face the audience and say the words. You'll have a few moments to say something about why you're up there. I was there to shill for TAFF, so I came up with a short and memorable pitch for TAFF. I said that it was given to some of the cream of the fannish crop, and somehow I got on the list. You make up a short segment explaining your purpose for being up there that will make you slightly memorable or at least add some time to the goings-on. If you're Robert Silverberg or Connie Willis, you can make up a slightly longer schtick to go along.

Then you have to think of a segue. That's rough. I did a purposely ham-fisted pass to the reading of the names. And that's another thing: practice the names. It was easy for

my category, the hardest name was Taral Wayne. If you've got Somtow Sucharitkul or Ctein on your list, you should go over their names and make sure you pronounce them right. And double check with Neil Gaiman...Gaimen? Gaymen? Gaemon? That guy who did Sandman. It's easy to get that one right. Nothing will make you less popular with the people who love the person you're talking about than getting their name wrong. Also, make sure you remember what category you're presenting. That could be embarrassing too.

OK, you've gone over the names and it's time to open the envelope. There are a lot of ways to go about that. You should break the seal or sticker and then open the envelope. After it's open, pull out the piece of paper with the name of the winner. That will serve you right with all the awards shows you might be a part of. Read the name and take the statue before handing it to the winner. I chose the technique when I knelt down and offered up the Hugo to Tim Miller, the acceptor for Mr. Brad W. Foster. It got a laugh, which was what I was up there for.

And so, after all of that, you simply stand back and let the acceptor talk. They'll thank people, they might go on for a while, but all you have to do is stand back and then wait for the speech to end, the escort to link arms with the winner and then head backstage, where your job is done. That's it. Perhaps in a future issue, Mr. Glycer can give you the low-down on how to accept a Hugo. He's certainly had a lot of practice!



# 2008 HUGO AWARD WINNERS



## **Best Novel**

*The Yiddish Policemen's Union* by Michael Chabon  
(HarperCollins; Fourth Estate)

## **Best Novella**

"All Seated on the Ground" by Connie Willis (*Asimov's*  
Dec. 2007; Subterranean Press)

## **Best Novelette**

"The Merchant and the Alchemist's Gate" by Ted  
Chiang (Subterranean Press; *F&SF* Sept. 2007)

## **Best Short Story**

"Tideline" by Elizabeth Bear (*Asimov's* June 2007)

## **Best Non-fiction Book**

*Brave New Words: The Oxford Dictionary of Science  
Fiction* by Jeff Prucher (Oxford University Press)

## **Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form**

*Stardust* Written by Jane Goldman and Matthew  
Vaughn. Based on the novel by Neil Gaiman. Illustrated  
by Charles Vess. Directed by Matthew Vaughn  
(Paramount Pictures)

## **Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form**

*Doctor Who* "Blink" Written by Steven Moffat.  
Directed by Hettie Macdonald (BBC)

## **Best Professional Editor, Long Form**

David Hartwell

## **Best Professional Editor, Short Form**

Gordon Van Gelder (*F&SF*)

## **Best Professional Artist**

Stephan Martiniere

## **Best Semiprozine**

*Locus*, edited by Charles N. Brown, Kirsten Gong-  
Wong, & Liza Groen Trombi

## **Best Fanzine**

*File 770*, ed. Mike Glyer

## **Best Fan Writer**

John Scalzi

## **Best Fan Artist**

Brad Foster

## **Campbell Award**

Mary Robinette Kowal

**Denvention 3 Hugos** held by Connie Willis, Mark Olson  
(accepting for Jeff Prucher), Mike Glyer and John Scalzi.

**Hugo Award Analysis:** Mary Robinette Kowal's winning the Campbell Award was a real audience pleaser, one of the most loudly cheered events of the night. Adding interest, she not only received the award plaque, she received the "Campbell Award Tiara," an elegant piece of jewelry that went well with her yellow gown.

A more esoteric audience pleaser, approved by fans once it was explained to them, was the sample clip from *Heroes* where LASFS member Tadao Tomomatsu, in his role as a detective, questioned one of the series' regular characters. Outstanding!

Denvention promptly posted online the full Hugo winner list and the complete report of the voting statistics, including the top 15 works or people who received the most nominations in each category.

Skimming over the results, I was intrigued that the outcome in the Best Novel category validated only 50% of the buzz I heard at Westercon, where it sounded like *Yiddish Policemen's Union* and *Brasyl* were duking it out. Instead, the online buzz predicting a strong showing for *The Last Colony* proved more meaningful, as the Chabon and Scalzi novels finished 332 to 323, *Yiddish Policemen's Union* winning by 9 votes. Helping to make the finish close, when *Rollback's* votes were redistributed to the remaining two finalists, they split 104-40 in favor of *The Last Colony* (the other 42 votes either showing a blank or a nominee that was already out of the running.)

As for *Brasyl*, although it led the field with 65 nominating votes, on the final ballot it got only 110 first-place votes and finished fifth. In fact, only 464 out of 745 ballots cast a vote in any position for *Brasyl*.

Scalzi figured in another race of compelling interest, for the Best Fanwriter Hugo. In last year's cliffhanger ending Dave Langford edged John Scalzi by one vote. There was no such drama this year – John Scalzi started with 190 first place votes and locked up a majority early in the automatic runoff.

Scalzi made a very gracious acceptance speech that ended by encouraging people to seek out other quality fanwriters and spread the award around. Very likely, his win will crystallize in voters' minds the (quite accurate) belief that they can look for prospective nominees in a lot of different venues and media. It will be interesting to see whether there is a ripple effect adding several new fan writers' names to next year's Hugo ballot.

In Best Fan Artist, Steve Stiles extended Brad Foster, Foster ultimately winning 165-115. (And Foster's sixth career win set a new cumulative Best Fan Artist Hugo record.) Even though Stiles is formally the third-place finisher (based on the count when Foster's votes are disregarded), I'm most interested in the stats of the "last nominee standing," the one the winner needed to overcome to get a majority. Does this result mean Stiles is gaining ground among Hugo voters? On the other hand, Frank Wu withdrew this year may be back on the ballot in 2009. That obviously will affect the outcome, too.

# John Hertz's Westercon Notebook

Westercon LXI, "Burning Fan," July 3-6, 2008

J.W. Marriott Resort, Las Vegas

**Writer Guest of Honor, Kage Baker;**  
**Graphic Artist, Lubov; Fan, Milt Ste-**  
**vens. Attendance 320; Art Show sales**  
**\$4,800 (\$1,300 at auction) by 24 artists.**

It was the first Westercon in Nevada. One of our finest fans was Guest of Honor. The town was a palace of fantasy, the luxurious hotel off season was remarkably empty and cheap. I probably could have gotten egg in my beer.

I've read *Last Call*, *The Godfather*, and *Diamonds Are Forever*. I don't remember how long I've known Joyce & Arnie Katz. When Rick Sneary moved to Henderson, it seemed impossible he could live anywhere but South Gate. That proved true. But no omen; James Daugherty our chairman, and his wife Kathryn, thrive. I'd never been to Las Vegas.

Leaving my home airport I saw a Patsy Cox sculpture "Los Angeles County Conglomeration," two five-foot lengths of spheres and trumpet mouths in high-fired clay with engobe. Arriving I found Chris Garcia setting up the Fanzine Lounge, flanked by Leigh Ann Hildebrand and España Sheriff, the San Francisco triptych. I had brought, I thought, something congenial for Hildebrand; wrong again. At such moments the best thing is to go find Registration.

Sue & Steve Francis were home from DUFF, touring the U.S. for balance. Westercon being rare for them, they had readied with Midwestcon; they would go to the Worldcon; Armadillocon for a chaser. The bad news was Bert Carlson, treasurer of the Seattle for 2011 Worldcon bid, killed in a car wreck on her way. Four with her survived. The Seattlers did not need another reason to wear black. But their show went on.

At Opening Ceremonies, Tadao Tomomatsu sang "Secret Agent Man," or possibly "Secret Asian Fan," in the manner of Elvis Presley, and made it rhyme with "Westercon." Baker said she'd just gotten an idea for a story that was due in October, so the con was already productive for her. Lubov said she was glad to be back. Stevens drew cheers.

A Las Vegas resort hotel has a convention hall and a casino. The casino is the center. It really is open all hours. The electronic gambling machines are a wonder; I passed gawk-

I'M NOT A CHEF, BUT I  
PLAY ONE ON TV, OUR MAITRE  
D IS A ELVIS IMITATOR, AND  
OUR WAITERS BELONG TO ACTORS  
EQUITY!



ing among ours whenever I could. Restaurants range from cheap to costly. The hotel wants you to feel gratified, wants you to find something to suit your reach; gambling income makes it generous. I ate at Wooloughan's Irish pub. Garcia was moved to

He had the greatest power of  
admiration.

C.L. Barber

speak of James Bacon, with whom he was starting a new fanzine *Journey Planet*, from a one-shot at Orbital; Claire Brialey will be along, so it may not be quite like trying to live on a diet of coffee and cola.

This was the debut of a Reno for 2011 Worldcon bid, and of two Westercon bids, Pasadena for 2010 and San Jose for 2011. Reno, possibly encouraged by Bucky the Crab, cartoon mascot of Bucconeer the '98 Worldcon, and conscious of bidding from Portland for a Worldcon Over There, had got Brad Foster to draw as a mascot Rennie the Carpetbag. At the Pasadena party, Sherri Benoun recalled visiting Kyoto, seeing a tour

of U.S. Toyota employees go by, and exclaiming "Oh look, a U.S. tour." Her Japanese relatives asked "How can you tell?" She answered "They're speaking English." In the Hospitality Suite, the tabletop blockpiling game Jenga. Garcia said party reviews in the newsletter had to be in *haiku* form, so I wrote,

Building a tower  
Niven and a 12-year-old  
Seem to be the best.

On Friday, in the same room, I found Tomomatsu explaining it was the *previous* man who was asked "Why do you shake hands?" Women knitted. In the lobby, Reno chair Patty Wells said "I waited for Portland hotels as long as I could." I caught a glimpse of *Match Game S-F*. Kevin Standlee could indeed call forth the personality of a game-show host. His wife Lisa, busy with tech, denied everything. To the Art Show. Light here is always a problem, hotel "function rooms" being designed to light events very different from ours; this year, alas, we believed the hotel, although we could have brought lighting from Los Angeles, and the room darkled. Theresa Mather went out for flashlights. Art Show chiefs Elizabeth Klein-Lebbink & Jerome Scott made "1 flashlight," "2 flashlights," "3 flashlights" buttons for tour leaders to stick near artwork as awards.

My tour pondered, what is *professional*? what is *well-finished*? how do you tell? The burning question for me is "What do you see?" You can't see a person is expert. You conclude it, perhaps rightly. In s-f art this is acute; rightness is within a framework the artist invents. Lubov had brought originals of several oils. Her "At the Pond" (Program

In poetry those who are skilful can  
reveal an emotion in a scene and a  
scene in an emotion.

Wang Fu-Chih

Book front cover), a nude woman butterfly-winged, prone on a leaf, had to be magical; a ladybug was half as big as her finger, nor could her musculature move those wings. I gave 1 flashlight to Sheriff's "Haunt," one of

few monochromes, a woman in snow, immobile while her hair and gown blew in the wind, bare-legged; another to Peri Charlifu's "Lost Lenore," the diagonals of her fur collar and face for focus, her pupils fantastically wide.

Sue Francis and Larry Niven came to Regency Dancing. Fuzzy Pink Niven couldn't, so I dined with the Nivens afterward. Matthew Tepper didn't attend the con; who was first to tell him the hotel's master chef was Gustav *Mauler*? We got to the Valencia Ballroom, with a roof view, for the end of Lynn Gold's filk concert, there being a coincidence of her name and her birthday; then Independence Day fireworks. Joni Dashoff said her son Jared, only non-Asian in his high school, surprised its Mah Jongg club. Similarly when the late Gary Louie found Los Angeles fandom he mixed right in. Martinis at 2 a.m. in the Fanzine Lounge After Dark. Hildebrand and Sheriff discussed Harlan Ellison. A television showed the David Lynch *Dune*. I took Sheriff to find Tomomatsu. For the newsletter,

Loscon toga feast  
Begs "Eat grapes." I hear Elayne  
Say "Must have cow now."

Mary Ellen Daugherty came to the Fanzine Lounge on Saturday, looking for Chairman James. She said "No relation." About her late husband Walt, Westercon's Founding Father, Alan White had built a fine display for the Art Show. Christian McGuire again brought spectacular s-f matte and illustration from Local 790, I.A.T.S.E. (Int'l Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists, and Allied Crafts). Mather on her tour said she liked the vitality of amateur art. To "Keeping an S-F Club Alive," Ed Green, Kevin Standlee, Mike Willmoth. Outreach, certainly; who will do it? From the audience I asked if *Look for young people* was ageist. A man said "Where are the hall costumes?" so I happening to be a hall-costume judge got up, gave Standlee a rosette for his Captain of White Star Federated Spaceways outfit, and sat down.

Programming chief Kathryn Daugherty

scheduled a panel on Core Fandom. But the Katzes didn't attend the con. She made it Mike Glycer, Gold, Kevin Roche, and me. At the '84 Worldcon I had been on "Who You Callin' Fringefan, Fringefan?" Stevens in the audience proposed "residents" and "tourists." Gold knew mass-media fans who considered

Those who have no power to judge  
of other times but by their own,  
should always doubt their  
conclusions.

Johnson

her far from core and cried "Eeuw, you read *books*?" I said, "Our fanzines, filking, Masquerade, have some element of participation, some element of art." An hour later Glycer moderated Stevens, Willmoth, and me on "Fannish Trivia". In this company I was out-classed. I told of Scott Shaw in peanut butter at the '72 Worldcon. Stevens said, "I was Hotel Liaison. He got the peanut butter off in his bathtub. It looked awful. He gave the maid \$20. She said she'd seen worse; what was *that*?"

Woody Bernardi said, "Why don't you call the Katzes? The Veggrants meet at their place tonight. Here's the phone number." I reached Arnie before the Core panel and spoke awhile. But I was a judge in the Masquerade and couldn't abandon one duty for another. We gave Best Master to Anastasia Hunter for "Mortals Enchanted Here," in dark cerulean blue; Best Journeyman to Danae Youngard for "The Scottish Play," wine-red over an aquamarine gown; Best Novice to Jeremy Check for "No-Face," more texture in its black than the version I'd judged at the '07 Worldcon in Japan. Tasha & Chuck Cady won Most Authentic (Journeyman) as "Offering to Tchernebog" from the S.M. Stirling book *Peshawar Lancers*, twilight blue, forest green, and frightening. Afterward Bernardi kindly gave me a ride to the Katzenhaus, dropping off Ron Bushyager who was staying at another hotel.

There were beets and Braunschweiger left, and beer, and Ross Chamberlain who may yet

send art for my fanzine. He and the Katzes and I had all been Westercon Guests of Honor. In Shakespeare "What's in a name?" is Juliet's line when her family is already at feud with the Montagues. I don't think *Core Fandom* was meant as an act of exclusion. It may have been a reply to feeling excluded; it may have been yet more innocent terminology. "We were going to call it *Traditional Fandom*, for a love of tradition," Arnie said. "We kicked it around for months. Show us a better term." But I had not come to quarrel, about that or Webzines either. I loved these fen; the way to get them in my convention was to go to them. We talked of Marshall McLuhan and topology. Teresa Cochran helped.

Cooler in the night,  
Who cares how much we agree?  
One mountain, one man.

Back to the Marriott. Tom Galloway, Janice & Chip Morningstar pondered debates as part of a con schedule. I thought fans' minds showed better in the more free-form conversation of our usual panels. In the Fanzine Lounge After Dark were layered drinks, blue-raspberry vodka, orangecello. I heard James Joyce and Jackson Pollock were the

Your chief trouble is that you think  
you've got a sense of humor. It con-  
fuses people.

Max Christy

same person. It was 3 a.m. Andrew Trembley said "I'm going to succeed at sleeping while others fail." At the Xanadu party Lubov said she first read Shakespeare translated by Pasternak, now was trying English. We discussed *To bring home the wealth of the Indies, you must carry the wealth of the Indies with you*. On one tentacle, translating poetry calls for a poet. On another tentacle, by communication one receives what one didn't already have. I said art was partly subjective, partly objective.

Daylight Sunday. Pasadena won unopposed for 2010. Espresso with Sandra Chil-



No! No! *Bad Nameless Space Horror!* No!! Bad!!

dress & James Briggs, to whom SMOF Racing now meant their horse Cara Blanco, a winner on Friday, his silks a propeller beanie in purple, gold, and green, on the sleeves white stars. Bobbi Armbruster and the Wombat took shares. To the post-Masquerade session. "The Scottish Play" sparked discussion of the relative weight of story and costume. We said, do what you deem will be good, find your own focus, think; drama can lose, or come-pose-turn-go win; the judges' task is to rate a strong apple higher than a weak orange. An entrant: how do people learn? The Wombat said, sometimes there are panels at cons; the West Coast has Costume College; local clubs. Masquerade Director Joseph Kerezman said, learn by doing. I said, why wait to be taught?

At Closing Ceremonies, Tomomatsu in the manner of Louis Armstrong sang "And I think to myself —" and we all joined in, "What a wonderful world." Supper with Judy Bemis & Tony Parker, who often have been where I haven't. Bemis is another SMOF Racing partner. Secret Masters Of Fandom, as Bruce Pelz said *a joke-nonjoke-joke*. Also Bernardi had given me *Marquee 5/6* and *Wood Pulp 1* with his perspective on Las Vegas fandom around the '87 NASFiC and the '93 Silvercon, which called for their moment. I went to or was gotten by the Garcia gang. Hildebrand noted the smugness of atheists. I said, we theists are partly to blame, we must have been annoying. Geordie Howe earlier with his Canadian perspective had helped me think about reverse snobbery. Dave Clark arrived with a copy of *Pebble in the Sky*. His book business, he said, had been good. Klein-Lebbink said the Art Show, a third the size of Loscon's, had sold half as much.

People drifted in and out of the Dead Dog Party. I found the Fanzine Lounge After Dark watching *animé*. James Daugherty strolled over the grounds with me for an hour or two; cooler in the night. I wanted to know

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Dichotomy, a hard word at 3 a.m.

Kipling

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and indeed asked him what he'd learned. But as fans will we drifted in and out of topics, talking of acceptance, exclusivity, reason. At one point I said something so unexpected he stopped. That was unexpected for me. I don't think I do it very often, and don't try to. I did it to Harlan Ellison once. In another hour or two my airport bus would come; I didn't care to sleep. I walked through the casino and the empty halls. Sometimes I wrote.

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## Conventional Reportage

**Bouchercon 38**

**Baltimore, MD**

**October 9-12, 2008**

**Report by Martin Morse Wooster**

I knew I was not in our fandom when I showed up for Bouchercon at 6 on opening day. I normally show up around 6 the first day of a con, but was somewhat croggled to find that registration closed at 5:30!

Like most Bouchercons, Bouchercon 38 had minimal nighttime programming to enable congoers to take in five tracks of programming beginning at 8.30. So I went to the bus stop to head to where I was staying. A middle-aged African-American woman was sitting next to me and a thug walked up to her. "Ever see a man stomped to death?" The thug said.

So no wonder the world mystery convention was in Baltimore! Here we were in Mobtown! As we know from "The Wire," "Homicide," and other David Simon shows, Baltimore is a violent, depraved town where the cops roll the wheelbarrows out on Saturday night and toss the corpses in on Sunday morning. And as we know from the novels of Laura Lippman—you know, *Mrs. David Simon*—even the yuppies in Federal Hill and Canton spend most of their time committing felonies.

Of course downtown Baltimore is as safe as other large cities. But the organizers of the convention didn't know that. One Canadian novelist told me that the convention staff told her not to leave the hotel at night, because she would be killed.

The reason a convention staffer would be so clueless is that the con was run from Milwaukee. Bouchercon has a strict four-year zoned rotation. When it came time for the East Coast's turn, there were no bidders. So the staff of *Crimespree Magazine*, a Milwaukee-based semiprozine, bid for the convention. They ran it with some logistical support from Mystery Loves Company, the Baltimore mystery bookstore. Their main hotel was the Sheraton City Center, which, as the Wyndham and the Omni, hosted a great many Balticons in the 1980s and 1990s.

The Milwaukeeans, whether deliberately or from ignorance, ignored Baltimore's rich literary traditions. Six blocks away from the

convention is the tombstone of Edgar Allen Poe, Surely someone could have organized a visit, and perhaps read Poe's poems, much as Fritz Leiber did so memorably at the 1980 World Fantasy Convention. Two blocks away, Dashiell Hammett worked as a private detective for a few years before he became a successful author. But the Milwaukeeans cared as little about Hammett as they did about Poe.

Bouchercon was a generic convention that could have been held anywhere. The 1400 fans tended to be older than sf fans, and more likely to be women; Bouchercon was about 65 percent female, with an average age of 60. Over 90 percent of the panelists were authors; there were no fan panels and the travel budgets for book editors to come to Bouchercon were severely cut, ensuring that these editors stayed in Manhattan.

There was even less of an overlap with sf fandom than there was at the last Bouchercon I attended in 2001. I estimate that there would not have been more than five people who were both at Bouchercon and Denvention. Larry Smith's staff did run a table (although Smith was at Albacon in Albany) and reported good sales; mystery fans will also read Terry Pratchett and Jasper Fforde.

The most surprising ex-fan in Baltimore was Scottish cartoonist Jim Barker, a frequent contributor to British fanzines in the 1980s and 1990s. I tried to make contact with Barker, but never managed to talk to him. (I would have left a message at the voodoo board except, oh yeah, this is *mystery fandom*, they don't have voodoo boards). Barker now has a magnet business, and sells magnets with his cartoons to tourists. He also says he does promotions, public relations, and "personalized cartoons." His websites are [magneticscotland.com](http://magneticscotland.com) and [cartoonise.com](http://cartoonise.com).

Although there was a small con suite, staffed by members of Sisters in Crime, what you do at Bouchercon was go to panels. I went to six of them, which was six more than I saw in Denver.

The first panel I went to was on the future of the mystery short story, moderated by wispy-voiced *Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine* editor Linda Landrigan. The panelists, most of whom were associated with Mystery Brief, a website promoting mystery short fiction, gassed on about how Conan Doyle was really something and that Chandler guy, he was swell too. I then asked how many markets paying more than five cents a word there were for mystery short stories. The answer: *Ellery Queen*, *Alfred Hitchcock*, *The Strand*, and invitation-only original anthologies. There isn't anything else. No one has ever figured out a way to pay writers for online mystery short stories.

Bouchercon had three pro guests of

honor. I missed Laura Lippman's speech, but heard some of Distinguished Contributor Lawrence Block's. Block promised his fans that he wasn't going to kill off any of his many series and was too poor to retire, particularly given the stock market's troubles. His fans rewarded him with the longest line for any author; there were at least 100 people in line and many had several books to be signed.

International guest John Harvey was very entertaining. He explained that he had actually written 100 books, but far too many of them were Westerns and biker novels written under pseudonyms for New English Library for 300 pounds a year. Writing one 400-page Charlie Resnick mystery a year was far less onerous than grinding out pulp at a 10-book a year pace! Harvey also enjoys adapting other authors' work for the radio, and after writing tough detective fiction all day relaxes reading North American literary fiction, particularly Lorrie Moore, Annie Proulx, and Alice Munro, who is "my favorite writer writing now." Harvey also enjoys the detective novels of Peter Temple and George Pelecanos.

The panel that was most like a Worldcon panel was the Batman panel, in which various comics writers and mystery novelists pondered the Caped Crusader. They asked questions one might not have thought of, such as: Does Bruce Wayne preserve the bedroom he slept in as a kid? Is Batman a detective? (No, but he does detection.) Is Alfred more like Batman's mom or is he an SAS veteran and professional armorer? (A little bit of both.) How closely does Batman resemble Monk? (Pretty darn close.)

As for the beer panel, it was pretty lame. But everyone who asked a question got a free beer!

I also attended the live auction, hosted by Chris Ceepak and Donna Andrews, a Washington-based mystery author who also writes some sf. The auction raised quite a bit of money for the Enoch Pratt Free Library and the poverty-fighting Viva House. Most of the prizes were signed copies of novels, but many authors offered something more, including margarita mix, gardening tools, a hand-mixed bootleg of Bruce Springsteen songs, and a set of toilet seat covers guaranteed stolen from a rest stop on the Garden State Parkway.

The biggest bid was \$1,500 for a Tuckerization in Laurie King's next novel (not a Sherlock Holmes pastiche). Second prize was author Sandra Marshall, who promised to Tuckerize a dog and a cat in her next novel. That got \$300, until one fan said she would give \$900 if Marshall would also include her guinea pig. Though the novel didn't have a guinea pig, Marshall promised to add one, and the pet-loving fan ponied up \$900.

Sunday's Anthony Awards luncheon had Mark Bellingham as toastmaster. Bellingham,



## Never compromise your delusions of grandeur

a British novelist and comedian, encouraged heckling as long as it met the standard of British comedy clubs, where anyone can get on stage for five minutes and get the hook if they're not any good. Bellingham said that the all-time greatest heckler was someone who ridiculed American actor Eric Douglas. The hapless Douglas insisted on outstaying his welcome to increasing boos. "Do you know who I am!" Douglas said, "*I'm Kirk Douglas's son!*"

One heckler stood up and said, "No, *I'm Kirk Douglas's son.*" A second, a third, and a fourth, all of who pretended to be the son of the star of *Spartacus*, arose. The younger Douglas then ran off stage.

Here are the winners of the 2008 Anthony Awards.

Website: Stan Ulrich, *Stop, You're Killing Me!*

Special Services: Jon and Ruth Jordan, *Crimespree Magazine*

Best Critical Work: Jon Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley,

*Arthur Conan Doyle: A Life in Letters* (Penguin)

Best Short Story: Laura Lippman, "Hardly Knew Her" (Otto Penzler, ed.,

*Dead Man's Hand* (Harcourt))

Best Paperback Original: P.J. Parrish, *A Thousand Bones* (Pocket)

Best First Novel: Tana French, *In The Woods* (Viking)

Best Novel: Laura Lippman, *What the Dead Know* (Morrow)

The entire ceremony, including tributes to Lawrence Block and the late James Crumley took 27 minutes!

I was Bouchercon member 1305 and I registered about a month beforehand. I'd say attendance of 1400 is about right. (Unlike 2001, the con did *not* sell out.)

In 2009, Bouchercon will be held at the Hyatt Regency Indianapolis, October 15-18.

### Capclave

Rockville, Maryland

October 17-19, 2008

Report by Martin Morse Wooster

First off, as the WSFA wars of 2006-07 recede, it's important to note who was and was not at Capclave. Alexis and Lee Gilliland weren't there. Nor was Keith Lynch. Ted White did attend, as did Charles Gilliland (who never took part in his father's feuds).

That being said, it's clear that Capclave has settled into a familiar pattern. This was the second year that Capclave was at the Rockville Hilton, and they are committed to one more. Like last year, attendance was about 250, in contrast to Disclave, which peaked at about 1100 members and had fallen at 500 when the convention ended in 1997. And because WSFA has chosen to stay in a relatively accessible suburban venue, Capclave is expensive; at-the-door memberships were \$60 and are rising to \$65 in 2009. The con had no art show, a pretty good dealer's room, and two tracks of programming. There were a few parties, including those for Raleigh in 2010 and Reno in 2011.

Following my Bouchercon resolve to Get to More Programming, I went to two panels. The small press panel was pretty generic; all I learned from it is that if you're a small press, you'd better be sure not to ship thousands of returnable copies to a big chain who then proceeded to return all of them, causing the small press publisher to go bankrupt.

The more interesting panel was of members of the "Sigma" sf group who periodically advises the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on futurist scenarios. This, the panelists explained, was the result of one guy at DHS's Science and Technology Directorate who thought it would be interesting to have sf

writers advise the government on futurist scenarios. Arlan Andrews, an *Analog* writer who worked as a White House aide during the Clinton administration and knew which pros to contact, aided him.

The official DHS pamphlet explaining the program was called “Stranger Than Fiction?” and stated “who better to help DHS balance more traditional thinking about homeland security than science-fiction writers? After all, Sci-Fi wordsmiths long ago told us about tourist spaceships and wireless handheld communicators.” The DHS brochure added that the sf writers were unpaid and that “members of the group hold advanced degrees—most have PhD’s—and others are medical doctors or professional engineers.” English majors Larry Niven and Michael Swanwick, though, are Sigma members.

The panelists couldn’t say what they did, except to note they were well fed. They also were met by feds who couldn’t say who they were or who they worked for. Thus it was far from clear if there was any conversation at these Sigma conferences between sf writers and bureaucrats.

The panelists, however, thought they were useful in exposing homeland security officials to new ideas. Michael Swanwick said he was happy to introduce the idea that there could be “victory” in the war on terror—i.e. a world where we could board an airplane with far less security than today. And Bud Sparhawk found the conferences a good tip sheet. He recalled one conference where the feds were photographing whiteboards—and Sparhawk was privately scribbling down some of the best ideas.

Saturday night WSFA held a party. The more dedicated WSFAans dressed up for it. Bob McIntosh wore his kilt. Lee Strong, recently retired from the military, showed off his medal from the Honorary Order of St. Christopher, a group that honors excellence in military transportation.

The winner of WSFA’s Small Press Award was Tom Doyle, for his story “The Wizard of Macatawa” in *Paradox Magazine*. Doyle, an enthusiastic participant in a local writer’s group, thanked his girlfriend for accompanying him on research to “spooky Michigan graveyards.”

WSFA then presented author GoH James Morrow and critic GoH Michael Dirda with specially commissioned paintings by Lynn Perkins. Morrow’s painting showed an Irish setter looking wistfully at the stars. Dirda’s showed a dodo (which for some reason is the official Capclave animal) in a library surrounded by books, many of which Dirda had reviewed favorably in the *Washington Post*.

Dirda said this was the best thing he had ever been given at a convention. David Hartwell concurred. Dirda’s painting, Hartwell said, “is the greatest gift I’ve seen. It shows

four or five levels of thoughtfulness.” He added that the best gift he had ever received was in 1986, when a convention in Louisville made him a Kentucky Colonel, with all the privileges of that rank, including being able to sit in the “colonels’ box” at the Kentucky Derby.

Afterwards we all had our cake and I went home.

### ***Pulpccon Torn Apart***

Once I read Mike Chomko’s September e-mail defending his conduct on the Pulpccon committee, I wasn’t surprised that a lawyer got involved in the controversy about who has the right to call their con “Pulpccon.”

Chomko, Jack Cullers, and Barry Traylor, three of the seven members on the Pulpccon committee, had been pushing for changes in the way that Pulpccon is run, such as holding it elsewhere than Dayton, OH. In fact, Chomko went off on his own and contacted three other Ohio cities about hosting the convention. But the four other committee members – including the chair, Robert Gorton — responded by voting to renew the contract with Dayton.

In the democratic spirit that characterizes America of the present day, Chomko soon demanded that Gorton and another committee member resign:

“Jack Cullers, Barry Traylor, and I have decided that if we want to move the convention forward, it is impossible to continue to work with Bob Gorton and Don Ramlow. They seem to feel that shortening the convention to three days will be enough to turn things around. They seem to think that by creating a few generic flyers that seem to be addressed to people who already know about Pulpccon, the convention’s troubles will be over. They seem to think that they need to devote very little time and energy to turn Pulpccon around. They seem to think that communication is unnecessary.”

The trio decided to move on, and take the Pulpccon name with them. Jack Cullers had researched the service mark originally registered by Rusty Hevelin and discovered it had lapsed in 1989. Cullers applied to have it re-registered in his name.

As a result of the schism, two Pulpccons were announced for next year, Pulpccon 38 in Dayton on Aug 14-16 and Pulpccon 2009 in Columbus on July 31-Aug 2.

However, on November 3 Jack Cullers received letter from Robert W. Jones, an attorney retained by Robert Gorton. The letter asked Jack to voluntarily withdraw his application to register the service mark “Pulpccon” and to discontinue using the mark on the Pulpccon 2009 website. As Chomko explained in an e-mail he sent to a list this week, Gorton’s attorney says that although Rusty Hevelin’s initial registration of the

“Pulpccon” service mark lapsed in 1989, Gorton has been named Hevelin’s successor in interest to Pulpccon and has been handling the con’s business matters since 2002, and “any use that Jack or others on the Pulpccon committee made of the service mark was “only with the express or implied authority of Mr. Gorton.”

So Chomko and company say they will be changing the name of their pulp convention in Columbus to PulpFest 2009. Their website is accessible by visiting [www.pulpcfest.com](http://www.pulpcfest.com).

### ***Craig Miller to Write the Resistance***

Craig Miller has a major role on the team creating *Resistance*, a new Australian sf movie and television project. Telling *File 770* readers that he’s writing the movie script amounts to letting the cat out of the cellophane bag, but there’s a lot more to Craig’s responsibilities than that.

*Resistance* is the story of a covert attempt by aliens from outer space to take over the Earth and a guerilla-style battle to stop them when most of the world won’t believe the threat exists. What makes the story even more interesting is its focus on a band of super-smart teenagers at the center of this conflict: not only do they have to save the world but they have to deal with school, hormones and dating.

*Resistance* was conceived by Andrew Dillon, executive producer of That’s-A-Wrap Productions, who’s now handing it over to Miller. He’ll develop a bible covering the movie and follow-on television series and then write the screenplay for the movie. “Craig’s a terrific writer with a wealth of experience. I’ve worked with him before and I know he can bring a special magic to *Resistance*,” said Dillon. “He’s also got a mind that can handle the complications of story and character that will see us through not just a movie but through story after story of a television series.” Miller will also serve as executive producer and showrunner for the planned follow-on television series.

Miller has worked in the entertainment industry with top creators like George Lucas and Jim Henson and on projects ranging from children’s series and young adult programs (*Curious George*, *Beast Wars*) to a horror anthology series for Showtime (*The Hunger*). Making him especially apt for this project is his background in science fiction, having been an avid fan of the genre since childhood. In his early days in the industry, he was a publicist who’s been credited with starting fan-based marketing which now drives much of what’s on the internet and what happens at the annual San Diego Comic Con. Production on the *Resistance* feature is expected to start later this year.

# London Film and Comic Con

by James Bacon



**Fans Promote LX, Odyssey and Zombiecon** at the London Film and Comic Con. Staffing the booth: Elvis, Graham Hill, John Dowd, Stef Lancaster, Dave Mansfeild and Ian Palmer.

Is it worth it?  
I bloody hope so.

One of the things I always think is that there are 'our' type of science fiction fans out there, who just haven't heard about conventions, societies and the social side of fan activity. There are thousands of readers of SF and many of them just read, this is fine by me, the more readers the better as it means more books published, one hopes.

There is an inevitable decrease in the amount of readers who want to engage about the literature that is their favoured reading. Of those that do, there are many avenues available for this type of activity. One would say the internet is the prime ground for new fans finding their way, finding others who not only want to read, but want to look a little deeper, who fancy reading a good critique of a work or getting a decent referral by way of a review onto other worthy works, or want to just explore their thoughts about a writer with others.

Yet the internet is only an island, although

having a decent web page is par for the course of running a convention. Unless we get out to wider audience, we will only attract those who already know what we are about. I have been doing this, and wrote about it in *Drink Tank* a while back.

Now it's really very important in my mind that we are honest about what our conventions are like and ensure we do not create any false expectations. I once saw this go horribly wrong, when a high profile magazine in Ireland, the *RTE Guide* (like *TV Guide* stateside or *Radio Times* in the UK) stated that a 'Star Trek celebration' would occur at Octocon, the national Irish Science Fiction convention.

It was an awesome disaster, as the con com, expecting 200+ people had to cope with an influx of some 600+ and the programme just about coped after some serious changes to the media end of it.

So it's just no good attracting people who don't really want an SF convention, while at the same time, I feel its really important to get out there and try and talk to people and let them know what we are about. Now as an

Eastercon Chair, it's up to me to exert the political will to do this.

So I did and my treasurer, Co-Chair and committee endorsed and supported it.

I decided that we should do this in a way that would involve other conventions, so using common sense, Odyssey, the 2010 Eastercon was the sensible place to start.

London Film and Comic Con was the next big thing, coming up, and I have worked for the guys who run this event, Showmasters, for a number of years, although due to work, college as well as other commitments like getting married, I haven't actually worked for the guys for well over a year, but that's OK, I know Jason, Andrea and Mark who run the show for about fifteen years now and Stef Elvis and Ian still work the shows, and very hard at it too.

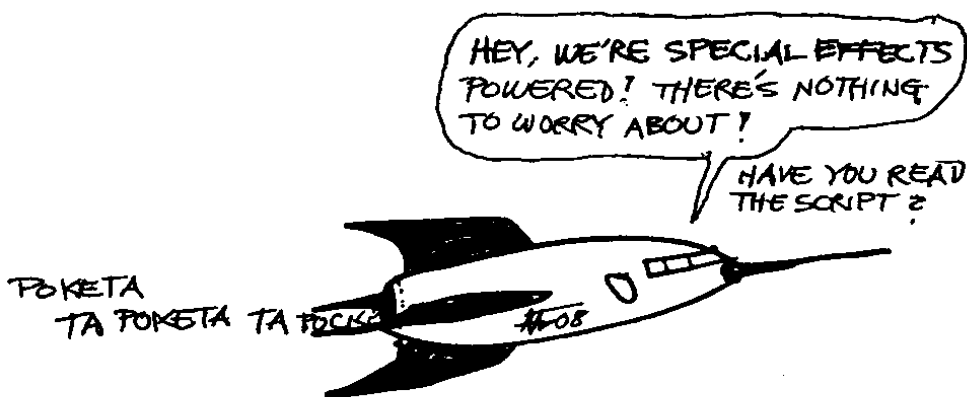
These are commercial events, and LFCC gets about 20,000 people at it over the two days. It's in the prestigious central London venue of Earls Court, which is on the Tube and they utilise about half of the massive Earls Court hall two. I am not sure how many dealers table in total there are, well over 300 maybe many more.

I spoke to the gang at Odyssey and they were supportive. My own Con Committee embraced the idea and thought it was worth trying as an experiment to see if it worked. Stef and myself are also running *Zombiecon*, a fun convention, and we thought we should also promote ourselves at an event, so this tied in another odd type of convention, while we also sought flyers from *Octocon* and *Novacon*.

In my head how a table looks is just boring, someone sitting behind a table feels all wrong, I don't want that type of stand. I wanted an open area if possible. I wanted a space where people could walk into, and I wanted something that would identify them to us as people who we should chat to.

Books.

Books you see are something that links us all, I hope. I know there are a few fans that are 'just' fans, who like the socialising or the writing or politics of it all, but nearly everyone I know who is a fan, is a fan of science fiction and to that end they read books. That's



the core of fandom, professionally published work, always has been really.

So, I thought if I had a shelf of books, it would interest people, and if we could offer these books for free, then this would result in anyone interested being able to be tempted, money, or lack of funds thereof would not be an issue.

I wanted space, posters and pictures on the walls, flyers on a table and John Dowd was quick to suggest a large offering of sweets.

Stef was able to get a table for *Zombiecon* and I was able to get a table for *LX* and *Odyssey*. Now these dealers' tables are not cheap. They cost about £140 each. I think we were getting about £275 worth of dealer space. Now due to the connection and an agreement to cross advertise *Showmasters* events, we were offered the space for a nominal fee. This was subsequently waived in total at the event, which was really terribly nice. Really that was VERY cool.

So, between *LX*, *Odyssey* and *Zombiecon*, we got enough volunteers to man the table. I went on the scrounge and various people offered me books, the great Mark and

Claire of course offering some of their own and helping me get my hands on others, amongst many others, all of whom I am very grateful to. I picked up books and in one case had books sent to me by post, which was really cool. Farah. I also borrowed some foldable shelves from Mark and Claire, I knew they had some, as I had gotten hold of some as well, but used them. So before work on the Friday, I loaded my car with posters, flyers, shelves, books, forms and of course *the carpet* and left for work at about 5am. I finished up in the afternoon and drove the short distance to Earls Court.

John Dowd was driving down for the weekend, and was also staying in Croydon with me, so this was the suggested rendezvous point. He had made good time and advised of how one should get parking, I did so, and shortly found him, on his scooter. So I parked up inside the second part of the hall after getting through various checks and getting the proper paper work and we set up the table.

John had also brought books down from various Sheffield sources and I took my time. Stef had already secured our spot, placing one table lengthwise at one end with body parts and various gore items, such as a real chain saw, hammer and pliers with a wonderful tongue. The other end we had another table length wise, and on this I put one set of shelves and flyers, then I set up the other two sets of shelves, one upon the table with the other next to this and started to sort the books.

A couple of years lurking in bookshops, followed by owning one myself has taught me how to sort books, I may not be able to spell, but I can alphabetise. I sorted through what we had, it was quite a lot, and started to fill the shelves. I have an idea of what

is good and what isn't, and condition mattered a little, but I was just being selective. Soon enough, I had filled the twelve shelves with books, the main drop being paperbacks, and the hardbacks, media tie-ins and anthologies on the shelves on the table. It looked good.

John had meanwhile driven his own car into the venue, gotten unloaded and had been attaching posters, pictures and flyers to the back wall and it looked well.

Of course, I had already laid out *the carpet*, and folded the front part back underneath itself, as it was too big for the area, and it looked stunning. I knew it would be useful, and was just too good to see disappear, I am ever so grateful to the Great and Glorious Leaders for their initiative and Steve Cooper who helped get *the carpet* to me, gosh some three years ago now.

After a few hours, we were sorted, we chatted with Jason, who knew John from a convention in Derby called *Inconsequential* which was in the Aston Court Hotel, Derby, in 1992, I met Jason myself at *Inconceivable Inconsequential II* at the Tudor Court Hotel, which was really in the middle of nowhere, but was a superb convention, in 1994.

I had a quick wander about as the venue was taking shape, bid my farewells to Stef and the lads and then John and myself drove off in convoy for Croydon, on the way, Liam Proven made contact and said that he had sourced a load of books in Bermondsey and that he would collect them and pass them to me in Croydon that evening. Once home, my wife cooked us chicken lasagne and I went to collect more books. Liam passed over a haversack load, in a quick stop on the street manoeuvre, which must have looked a bit bizarre. These books were good quality SF.

The next day I was working, but over dinner we had time to look at transportation. There are two tube stations that are good for Earls Court, either side of the massive complex - Earls Court and West Brompton. Using the interweb, we found that trains ran directly to West Brompton from East Croydon once an hour and took about 22 minutes to get there, which is superb really given the distance involved and Simoné agreed to drop John off at East Croydon in the morning, as I would already be working.

By the time I showed up it must have been about 4pm. Peter Harrow had journeyed down from Sheffield and joined John on the table at half eight. This was fortunate as two other people who were meant to help, had things arise, which were important, but even so resulted in last minute no shows.

The day had been busy; John and Peter both had differing styles. John offers sweets, chats with people and then they ask about the books really being free. *The carpet* seemed

**Jocylean Konrad Lee** in red baseball cap and **Dave Lally** talking to lady fans.





to get some attention which I think is nice, it is a beautiful carpet, such a wonderful piece of artwork, so unusual and eye catching. As I watch on, I note that John describes the conventions we are promoting in a way that complements what is going on this weekend. Peter seems to focus on where people have come from. This works well. His geographic knowledge of the UK added to his schedule of conventions that we must go to promoting LX, means that he is able to tell people where and when the next convention not far from where they live is on. This way other conventions get mentioned, and this works well.

The first thing I note is the devastation of the book shelves. The men have left it to me to refill and tidy, as is my wont, and I enjoyed giving it some work and restocking, although I also had Liam's books in Croydon for the following day, I got through a lot of our back stock.

A nice lady with a youngster compliments Peters attire, he is dressed in a very nice three piece suit, but he misses the compliment, which I would have just smiled and thanked, hoping for further niceties and continues on about the fancy dress at conventions. I sigh as I note my co-chair and friend miss this opening. She is a nice lady.

I help, my tactic is to encourage people to look at the books, and briefly chat about the books they like, are after or that are of interest. I step back then and allow them to browse, where upon when they find something, I offer flyers and chat. I make mention of our donation box, of course. Peter and John have the donation box fine tuned, and make mention of the no moral need at all to pay for books, but donations welcomed, which seems to work well with everyone.

Not everyone was interested in the stand, it wasn't to everyone's liking, and that was fine. The idea here is to target. Many people walk right by, some point at the body parts, others just continue on, to the rest of the dealers. I don't mind at all. I continue to chat, with no shortage of people, leaving some to look at books as I talk to the next person or group. Its all go.

I have a wander about at about half five. It's interesting the type of things that sell, and I must admit that I do have a slight inkling to some cult artefacts and memorabilia. Who could turn down some *V For Vendetta* promotional material, or a replica of Han Solo's gun. This weekend though, I found myself being collared and networking, mostly about Eastercon. As I hadn't been at the shows for a while, people were interested to know what I had been up to and what insane stuff we were pitching over at our space.

I spoke to a number of people, and secured a few cool openings, which I hopefully will bring to fruition for next year, never refuse

free stuff or dismiss ideas, that's what I say. Although amongst the autograph, T-shirt, Toy, weapon and collectable sellers there were a number of comic shops in attendance, with quite massive stands, and many a bargain to be found and a dealer from Surrey who has about a thousand books or thereabouts on sale, including some nice early editions of SF. I knew that book dealers had attended the shows, but I didn't know this dealer, who was with his son, who runs the business, and to be honest it just shows how things can be, I never knew he existed and he never knew about Eastercon, although let's be honest, his stock would fit in well at one.

Like what's that about.

It just reinforces my belief that conventions and fan endeavours, whether it be clubs or societies, need to get out to readers and let them know that they exist and of course the show organisers shared my opinion that there is of course a cross over, it's obvious that not everyone at the event might be interested in books, or even if so, interested in extending their hobby to going to conventions about them, but amongst the thousands there are people who are indeed very interested.

We closed up after 6pm, there were still people queuing to see Christopher Lloyd and Patrick Stewart, quite late in the day, and it took another half an hour to clear the hall. The day was deemed to be worth the exercise, and Peter, John and myself walked to West Brompton and separated as John and I managed to get another local train directly to East Croydon and arrange a pick up from the wife, while Peter started the long trek back to Sheffield, expecting to arrive home well after us.

So Sunday was my first really full day on the stand, and I really wanted to observe how it went, as well as getting out there and chatting. Crazy Dave Mansfield turned up for us, and again we were let down by two people, which seemed to be turning into a bit of a trend. Nevertheless Dave was superb. I took my time sorting out the books and filing the shelves, and re sorting them before the hall opened, noting which authors had gone, which surprisingly was a fair spread, including books I would have thought were quite hard SF.



Fully stocked, John refilled the sweet tray, this is a big aluminium bowl type thing filled with sweets. Offering people sweets as they slow down to look at what we are on about is a tactic that works, people are very friendly and nice, surprised that we are giving away sweets, and many happily stop to chat and ask us what we are about.

I focus on the free books, I see people slow and look quizzically at the signs and bookshelves, some people just see book shelves and make a bee line for them, I then explain they are free and allow them to look over the books. Just like John found the day previously, it's a case that people first are astonished that something is free, and then as book readers show interest in the shelves.

The doors open at 10 a.m., and at that stage the 'early bird' customers swarm in, all heading to the far end of this vast hall for the various queues to get signatures from the guests. The cult of popularity is what this event is about. Meeting a movie or television star is the main motivator for most here.

The guests sign signatures all day, for anywhere between £10 and £25. Although to the uninitiated, this seems like a lot, to purchase any signature online or in shops, is significantly more expensive. It's also about a tiny piece of history, or owning a moment in time, where you can point at an injection of adrenalin as a personal goal or wish came through as you meet the person from a favourite screen moment or masterpiece and know you have met them and have a memento of it all.

Not unknown to us book fans that type of thing now really, book signings and meeting authors has always been on the agenda, although it must be admitted in a more relaxed fashion, but Orbital had to manage two huge Gaiman queues at Eastercon, so not always.

There are a huge amount of personalities

on hand, from Claudia Black (whom I don't know) that John keeps mentioning to John Landis and Tom Savini, who are although personalities, are from a different end of the movie industry. There are a number of 'reunions' where people from shows are gathered again, perhaps not for some time, and The Goodies are on hand as well as a host of actors from Indiana Jones. Interestingly the appeal is there for a variety of back grounds, genres and professions.

Near to the side of the hall where we are, there is the 'Photo Booth'. This is where, again for a fee, one can have a photo with the guest of your choice. Now that would be the more popular ones, well popular here. It should be noted that what is actually popular is hard to define; people from middle rate TV programmes can have a cult following, while I have seen some huge stars just sit all day with no one really interested. That must be a humbling moment.

So over in this area, at different times, a professional photographic team photo hundreds of people with a given star, and then, a few hours later you collect your photo. Now that is a bit awesome and it's a revenue winner as well, because it creates another item that well let's be honest is very desirable to get signed.

The location of this area seems to work in our favour, as people circulate around the hall, and we are within this circuit as people go from the signing area, to the photo area to, the talk area. Another big part of the hall is cordoned and walled off and seated for hour long talks. The major guests all do a session, again there is a charge, although it's about a fiver, and questions are also taken from the floor. The actors love these at times as they get to perform, some sing, some engage in humour and others give some really hard answers.

By eleven in the day the doors have opened to people paying a lesser fee, and again another gush flows into the hall. The first hour is interesting and people browse by and chat, but I perceive it as being slow. John advises calm and states that it was the same the day previous, by half eleven, all three of us are chatting and talking continually. John has a toothache, and I get some paracetamol, one could probably find anything in this hall.

As we chat, we talk about our conventions, (as if we own them all) and people home in on what attracts them or they are interested in and we hand out flyers, web address' and general info as we find what is catching peoples interest.

I am not as outgoing as I expect people would think, having been a book seller for a while, I am reluctant to interrupt people browsing at books, but offer advice and since I stocked the shelves am able to quite readily answer what stock we have. Again as the shelves are depleted, I restock.

Only for Liam's books we would have been stuffed. I note there is a lot of Pratchett and this seems to go well, with one girl circling a while, as she think two free books is more than fair. Eventually we suggest for a donation she can have the other one she wants. On average people give us a pound for books, some people are broke and we don't mind, other take three and drop a fiver, it works out about a quid a time. Some people just want to know what we are about.

I enjoy chatting about books and find myself being asked to recommend writers based on the reading experiences of people, 'I like this - who would be like that.' I imagine that will upset a few.

At lunch time Dave Lally turns up and is an immediate power house, this is our time now, people have had the signatures or photos and are wandering around. We don't expect memberships at the venue, although we have the where withal to take them, as we just want to let people know that we exist. Then Jocylean Konrad Lee turns up and also helps on the stand. She was at the event on her own steam, with some fellow students from Swindon or Swansea Uni I think, a

regular at Eastercon who has grown up with it, she stands with a huge Final Fantasy Gun Sword as she talks to people.

John later notes that a lot of what we think is the 'missing young fandom' was actually here in the hall, happy to take books and flyers and chat with us. I also note a lot of antipodeans. There are over a million south Africans now in South England, a huge movement of people in very recent times, and their accents give them away and I chat about Probe and the SFSA, which most of them don't even know exists.

By the end of the day, well we are a bit tired and the hall empties out at 5pm. I go and get my car, I had found some on street parking, once John had pointed out that it might be free on a Sunday, which was astonishing as parking for the day was £17 although I had intended to park in my work.

There is a marshalling system for event traffic going into the show and eventually at about 6 p.m., we load up, the stand is taken down in my absence, and I brush off *the carpet* and take my time carefully folding it up.

The hall comes apart fast, and in no time we are on our way home to Croydon. Johns tooth is OK, so he is happy to drive home. Despite his ailment he was there all day chatting and he feels alright enough to drive back home to Sheffield. I ensure he agrees to text me upon his arrival. I know how dangerous tiredness can be.

The following few days we get five memberships via email. John reckons one is a regular for sure, but this is more than the average of one a week that we get at this time of year. Zombiecon picks up a couple of memberships, and although Odyssey don't know if they had an increase with their treasurer on hols, Chair Rita Medany is happy with what we have done and keen to do another.

We decide that if we use the donations we get, and split the cost of a table between Odyssey and LX, that it would be possible to afford a table at Collectormania in Milton Keynes.

Now this is the big one. I don't care how big Dragon\*Con or San Diego Comic Con is, this event is, well it is manic, but it must be the busiest SF show in the world.

Milton Keynes shopping centre is one huge big massive long L-shaped mall, and at one end it has a vast open area, a square, Middleton Square to be exact. For Collectormania some 300 dealers tables, and up to 40 guests will appear and upon this the masses will descend.

Its free you see. It's in a shopping centre, there is no entry fee. Milton



Keynes is just about equidistant from London and Birmingham; it has a great road system and is next to the M1. The shopping centre have made it publically known that on an average weekend they get about a quarter of a million shoppers through their doors. They count them in and count them out, it's a legal and fire requirement and makes commercial sense. On a Collectormania weekend, well it goes to 600,000.

That's right, over half a million people. Now maybe half that are regulars, who just happen to be in the shopping centre, so let's say a quarter of a million people show up just to see the show. Now that's incredible. Therefore there is a waiting list for dealer's tables, and as much as they would like to, I know the guys cannot give us a discount on table space.

I also think the free books and free sweets thing will work even better, as there will be a less specialised punter wandering about. I also know that there are quite a number of stands that sell books as well as everything else, the way that dealers compact so much into so little space has to be seen to be believed, complex shelving systems and space utilisation is the name of the game at this show. So we are now on the list and I am off getting more books.

I just think that this is a way to meet other fans, who may just be interested in what we do, the whole idea or concept of what a fan is, is hard to define, but if people like books, like chatting about them and fancy discussing them further, want to hear from authors and enjoy a social aspect then I want them to consider Eastercon.

So we have had a little success here with this outreach idea. Of course if it works for us, maybe it will work elsewhere, and I asked about whether Worldcon promotes itself at San Diego Comic-Con or Dragon\*Con. The immediate response, from those wise people whom people who are er younger are meant to consult, was not so good.

*Promoting Worldcon at D\*c and SDCC has been tried and shown to be comprehensively unsuccessful for getting people into US Worldcons*

Of course something that is comprehensively unsuccessful must be well known, charted with empirical evidence, recorded as failure with hard facts. Unfortunately when I ask then for specifics, it all feels a bit like that assertion thing that some fans come out with. I think it's called 'Fannish Fictional Assertion' where a statement is made, as if fact, but upon closer inspection or dare I say investigation, well it all falls apart.

It's not that bad actually, I am guilty of FFA, but as an apprentice in the secret ways, it was a bit disappointing to have vague info, as apparently someone did sit behind a table at SDCC and only got two memberships. That's comprehensively unsuccessful I sup-

pose.

We didn't sit behind a table. We gave away free books and sweets. We had people who are outgoing and also dare I say, charming and charismatic, and with Dave M, handsome and cool in a more cool than John Coxon way.

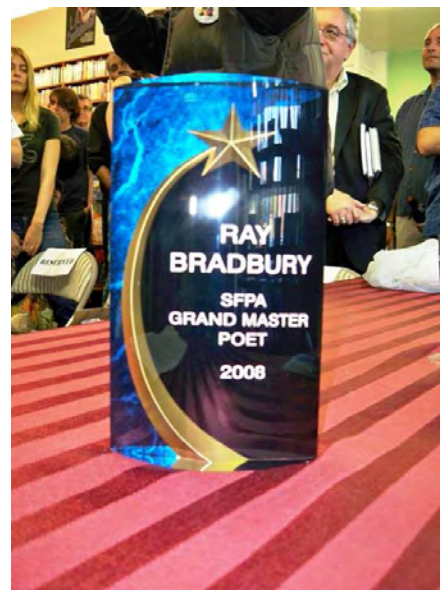
Well perhaps it's an exception, although we will only know that once we have run a few others. Rita has already said that Odyssey would do the same again as this year, well it's a London convention, and people were surprised that we were promoting something nearly TWO YEARS away. They were interested though in how that works. Sparks, who was also at the show, working for Jason and Co. on the tech end of things, (it's a small world) also thought that if a Glasgow Eastercon for 2011 came about, that promoting at Collectormania Glasgow would be a no brainer.

So onwards we go. Getting word out to the right people. This weekend I am going to post around 240 letters and LX posters to shops across the UK and some in Europe. Bookshops mostly. Asking them to put up our poster. It's such a cheap and easy way to get word out there. I was so impressed when Orbital posters were in the comic and book shops in London last year, this was a real effort I felt, and we need to do the same. Every weekend Peter visits shops in Yorkshire, with Flyers as well as posters and we will be mailing posters to the libraries in an expanding area around the convention, down to the midlands and up to The North East.

Believe it or not, we ended up getting 1000 posters, for what we would have gotten 250 for elsewhere, and if I remember the last time I did posters, about 100, because Hayley shopped around and found a really good printer, and we keep searching for ways to make our OPM money stretch further.

I collected more books thanks to Liam's connections on free cycle last weekend, a good eight boxes worth, although it's not enough, I also think a Map with pins pointing out events and calendar listing all the conventions going on for the next 18 months will make good wall fillers, as well a plastic stand with the most recent Ansible – I shall seek permission first, but that's a really neat one pager that probably says more about what this part of fandom is about than anything else.

Of course, it's not all altruistic endeavours. The moment of payback was quite special. Jason and I were chatting on Saturday evening, about lots of things, and he noted that John Hurt, one of his guests was leaving. He knows how much of a fan I am of Hurt and dragged me up and took time to introduce me, a Train Driver living in London, from Dublin. I just spoke of my appreciation of his acting in 1984 and he approved and was really quite nice. Payback comes in all forms.



Ray Bradbury's poetry award.

### *Bradbury Celebrates 88th*

Ray Bradbury celebrated his 88<sup>th</sup> birthday in the best possible way for a great sf writer, in a bookstore, surrounded by fans with newly-purchased copies of his latest book, feted by his colleagues.

Bradbury drew an overflow audience of well-wishers to Mystery & Imagination Bookshop in Glendale California this afternoon. I was in the spillover crowd on the sidewalk for awhile, looking at George Clayton Johnson through the door, and Bradbury's head through the store window. I also watched as one of Ray's Pandemonium Theatre cadre of actors, Robert Kerr, read Padre Mapple's sermon (Orson Welles' role in *Moby Dick*.)

The Science Fiction Poetry Association presented Bradbury with the 2008 Grand Master Poet Award as part of his 88th birthday celebration.

### *UCLA Dedicates Bradbury Plaque*

Ray Bradbury was the guest speaker at UCLA's annual library donor's dinner on September 19. John King Tarpinian reported, "This was the first time that the event had more RSVPs than places to sit. A very special honor was given to Ray; UCLA has created a plaque that will be installed outside the former typing room where he wrote 'The Fireman' in 1951 and then *Fahrenheit 451* in 1953. Mr. B's speech entertained the crowd, with many laughs and two ovations. Only Ray could tell a room of people at a top university that colleges are of no value...that all one needs is a library full of books."

# POSTMODERN PUBLISHING FIREWORKS AT THE LAS VEGAS WESTERCON BY FRANCIS HAMIT

The one panel I attended at the Las Vegas Westercon, on Authors and Editors, lacked its moderator Beth Meachem of Tor Books. There was one Tony Tadaro who took the lead away from Niven. He's new to Fandom, as far as I can tell. However he's promoting his own non-profit group for writers, and claims to have inside information about the submission process. His take is that self-publishing is a waste of time and dangerous, which is curious since his own work is self-published online at his own web site. (He apparently designs these as a business.) Not having read any of his work, I can't speak as to its merit or quality, nor am I inspired to read it, given some of the statements he made. He said that the best way

to get published is to find an agent to *collaborate* with who will push your work to a publisher. The obvious conflict of interest in such an arrangement aside, I think that if an agent could write to that level, he or she would simply do so without looking to pull an amateur into the process. At another point, he said that agents were demanding that first novels they submit to publishers be only between 90,000 and 95,000 words. Without regard to the merit of the writing, I objected that this reduces literature to a fungible commodity and that such a requirement simply didn't make any sense. He replied that the cause was a demand by Barnes and Noble booksellers that books pack a certain number to a box so that they could be shelved easily in their stores and that the big publishers had all acquiesced to this demand.

This fails the logic test on several points. Having just published a book from beginning to end, I can tell you that if you want to fit a text into a certain number of pages, it is easy enough to alter the number of lines per page, or the space between the lines, or the size of the type, to do that. (Whether or not it will be easy to read is another issue. One of the tyro mistakes of self-publishers is packing the text into as few pages as possible to get the POD production cost, and therefore the cover price, down. Boxes come in various sizes. There is no "all fit one size" requirement for



"YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE 'MOON HALF EMPTY' KIND OF GLUYS, HUH?"

packing books. Most book boxes have between 12 and 24 books each.

And Barnes and Noble has no such policy. Mary Ellen Keating says so. Who is she? The Senior Vice President of Corporate Communications for Barnes and Noble, Inc. I spoke with her today and she sent me an e-mail to that effect, for the record. (I'm a reporter, after all. I have to check that kind of thing out rather than just repeat it.)

So where did Mr. Tadaro come by this amazing and dead wrong assertion? I have a call in to him. He seems to have some kind of agenda, not that that kind of thing doesn't happen on convention panels all the time, but he seems to be very much interested in having new writers toe the party line and seek agency and mainstream publication rather than a do-it-yourself solution, of which many are offered. I agree that many are not the path to success, just on the numbers.

If you simply want to have your name on a book and have fifty or so copies for friends, it is easy to do now and this is the business that iUniverse and the rest are really in. Amazon is trying to capture as much of that business as they can with BookSurge and CreateSpace. It is very lucrative, except for the authors.

And now there is a panel proposed on "The Pitfalls of Vanity Publishing" for the next WorldCon. One I was supposed to be on

until I objected to the word "Vanity" as pejorative. The person putting those panels together, one "Min" (Who is she or he? I have no idea, myself.) didn't like my attitude, and said so. I was then moved to one about the Golden Age of Science Fiction. Aside from having been in it, I have no particular insights or knowledge to add, so it's not an optimal choice for those attending it. But "Min" does not like my attitude, or perhaps my well-known propensity for speaking truth to power. I am wondering if this panel is designed to keep the peasants (new writers) surly but not mutinous. There is a great deal of blind prejudice against self-published work

and the presumption that it must be, per se, badly done. My book, on the other hand, gets five star reviews and has attained national distribution. So I am living proof that "It t'ain't necessarily so". So, for that matter, is Charles Dickens who rolled his own on several occasions. And Walt Whitman.

I asked who is on that panel. I am curious to know whether or not someone is trying to scare people with false information. Every fan wants to be a writer and lots of fans know a lot of things that are just not so. These things tend to become memes that get repeated in our culture and a false one is particularly nasty because it causes people to waste time doing things like trying to fit a story that works very nicely at 120,000 words into a container three fourths that size. Usually any text can be cut, but the authors' intentions should predominate, and an agent is not a collaborator, but rather a servant of the principal, bound by law to represent his or her best interests without regard to their own.

So I will continue to query Mr. Tadaro so I can determine where he got the Barnes and Noble story or if it is just something he invented on his own. He was rather intent on pushing his point of view and cut me off several times when I tried to add a comment. Afterward he tried to lecture me on the proper deference that fans should show pan-

elists. It was fannish bullying, of course and, since I have now done 102 conventions, and dozens of panels over the last 30 years, failed to overawe me. I politely told him to stuff it.

As you know, this WesterCon was more or less a drive by for Leigh Strother-Vien and myself. We had much more fun playing poker. We went, as we usually do, to see old friends and make new ones. We succeeded in both. But the layout of the con was strange and the venue one that discouraged active participation. The size of the place seemed to dwarf the participants. I had an eerie feeling of being in the Mormon version of one of the late Saddam Hussein's palaces.

The room rates were sky high and we didn't want a third year of battling Marriott over their damnable insistence that feathers in the room are a *sine qua non* for comfort. (Leigh is allergic.) So we stayed elsewhere and at a distance. I had a book signing that Sunday. We came for three or four hours on Thursday and again on Saturday. The one time we visited the ConSuite, it seemed comfortable and well run, but it also seemed a good two miles away, and one had to pass through a smoke-filled casino to find it. As we were sitting talking, a confused and winded Larry Niven appeared, asked "Where is the Con?" with desperation in his voice and headed out. I was slightly fearful for his well-being. The company was generally pleasant, as it was when I visited the Green Room.

Not so pleasant were the actions of a group of Los Angeles fans, who decided to make a display of their personal disapproval of Leigh and myself (it's a very long and boring story and one I won't tell here). They walked by us repeatedly, making a great show of ignoring us. It took me back fifty years to the cliques at Montgomery County Junior High (where I first discovered science fiction at the age of 12). Leigh and I wondered if we had ventured to say anything to any of them if they would have stopped, put their fingers in their years and loudly proclaimed "I can't hear you." It was very amusing in a tiresome kind of way.

300 fans at a convention used to have ten times as many. Part of the reason was the site. Being in a suburb of Las Vegas makes it difficult and expensive to get to. One fan told me the cab fare from the airport was \$87 -- not a fan-friendly amount even in good times. But John Hertz told me he got a limo for slightly less than \$50. Most of those I met attending were either locals or staying elsewhere. (We got ten days lodging for less than five at that Marriott.) Westercons have been in a noticeable decline in recent years and younger fans have stopped coming entirely. The thin roster of guests, program items and other attractions might have something to do with that. Larry Niven was the only writer of great reputation who showed up.



Another fan saw conspiracy and said that the SMOFS do this kind of thing so that they can ram things through the business meeting that the rest of us won't stand for. I looked at that on the program and didn't see anything but some rewrites bylaws. As I understand it, (not a SMOF and not a business meeting fan either) any changes have to pass through two conventions to be adopted. As I said above, a lot of fans know too many things which ain't so.

It was a bad weekend in other ways, too. Tom Disch killed himself and a Big Name Fan I didn't know was killed on the way to the Con in a traffic accident and her four companions injured.

### **History, Where Is Thy Sting?**

The University of Iowa has made a very nice beginning in publicizing the M. Horvat fanzine collection on its website.

There's also a page devoted to describing the way amateur press associations (apas) work. I wish its section on Contributors was less celebrity-driven:

"Apas have historical significance in that many of them contain the amateur work of famous genre writers and illustrators. Much of this material predates the writers' fame, although this is not always the case. In addition, many apa members, though not professional writers, were significant voices in the world of fandom. Examples of apas with contributors of significant importance in the field include Apa-Five (Frank Miller), APA-H (Harlan Ellison, as 'Cordwainer Bird'), Apa-L (Alan Dean Foster; David Gerrold; Larry Niven); Apanage (Jane Yolen); Elanor (March Laumer); Fantasy Amateur (Marion Zimmer Bradley, Robert Silverberg, Donald

Wollheim); Rehupa (Charles de Lint; Michael Stackpole); and SAPS (Jack Chalker; Gordon Eklund)."

In this case the fascination with famous names has hoist the writer by his own petard. How can somebody understand the notion of an apa for hoaxes and still be taken in by the contributions of Cordwainer Bird? All of Cordwainer Bird's contributions to APA-H were written by Elst Weinstein or me.

### **Gearing Up for Halloween**

The Associated Press predictably readied America for Halloween 2008 by issuing articles about people dressing in costumes. But its coverage of science fiction costumers was not what you'd expect.

It was no surprise that the article's first example was a leader of the 501st Legion, who parade as Imperial Storm Troopers. What was unexpected is that the balance of the article would be devoted to World Science Fiction Convention masquerades. A reporter interviewed Marty Gear, a veteran fan who has presided over several Worldcon masquerades, and he provided historical perspective and comic relief all at once: "Costuming is the second oldest tradition in sci-fi fandom," Gear says. "The first is drinking beer."

### **Foss Fiction and Nonfiction Online**

Rick Foss displayed his versatile writing talents all over the Internet in November. The November 19 edition of *LA CityBeat* has his nonfiction article "Angels and Aliens, How science fiction slays the city." Also, Foss' novelette "To Leap the Highest Wall" was in the issue of *Analog on the stands at the same time*.

# ADVENTURES IN SPEEROLOGY

## BY PATRICIA ROGERS

*Patricia Rogers is helping sift through the late Jack Speer's fanzines, papers, and old photos. It's such an incredible experience she's been posting about it at length. (Thanks to Pat for allowing me to reprint her adventures here.)*

**Adventures in Speerology #1:** If y'all don't mind I will share with you my adventures in helping Ruth sort through Jack Speer's papers. Maybe I should be writing this up as a continuing saga for a print fanzine, as this process is going to take awhile. In my heart I think every day I spend with Ruth, and going through Jack's papers on my own, will bring amazing discoveries. Today was packed full of them and all in the space of about 3 hours.

I had told Ruth I would drop by around 3 p.m., and out of respect for Jack's noted punctuality I arrived at 3 p.m. on the nose. Ruth had 3 boxes of papers waiting for me in the living room. In the first box there were half a dozen envelopes of photos labeled with dates ranging from 1938 to 1951. The first one we opened was chock-full of treasures, wonderful photos of Jack and several that looked to me like folks at SF meetings. I stared at them thinking: Is that Ed Hamilton? - Is that Henry Kuttner? (And, YES! I am going to scan them for y'all to see.) The next envelope contained photos from Jack's years in Algeria, the envelope was dated 1945. The small black-and-white photos transported me to Rick's Cafe and had all the energy of a street bazaar. Photos of camel caravans, narrow streets with a Moroccan feel, marketplace scenes, Bedouin traders having afternoon tea, ancient ruins crumbling into the desert sand, and a few lovely ladies - one even in a belly-dancing costume. I was completely enchanted. Every envelope held treasures, both for Jack's family and for SF Fandom. Ruth told me stories and we laughed a lot; it was lovely. We especially had fun trying to figure out who all the shapely young ladies were in the photos, and one in particular who was in many of the photos. (These photos were taken long before Ruth met Jack!)

The next box was full of fanzines - no surprise there. But wait...there was a surprise: they were all addressed to Roy Tackett! Several of us in the SF club here had wondered what happened to Roy's fanzines. We thought maybe some of his collection went to the Williamson Collection at ENMU in Portales but no one was sure. Ruth said to



**Jack and Ruth Speer at the Noreascon 4 Hugo Ceremony.**

me, "Jack was the executor of Roy Tackett's estate." "Oh My!" I thought as my brain reeled. "Is it possible that Roy Tackett's fanzine collection is here too?" Certainly the bag after bag of fanzines that had been mailed to Roy make that a real possibility.

Next we went into Jack's office. There was a five-foot-tall stack of large boxes, each in the shape of a filing cabinet drawer. Written in pencil on each one was my name: "Pat." Ruth said Jack had started writing my name on boxes of SF papers he wanted to make sure I found. That was the only moment of the afternoon that really had me close to tears. I had no idea he had been doing that and it made me think, "Wow - he really did trust me to do the right thing." I have to work very hard not to let him down.

Ruth took me to an outbuilding and in the afternoon heat we unlocked and slid the doors open to reveal (in the words of Howard Carter) "Wonderful Things," and many more boxes. Some were labeled FAPA, but Ruth said that is not necessarily what is in them now. I had already seen all the boxes in the garage but have not been up to the attic yet, where Ed (Jack's son) tells me there are even more boxes. We have our work cut out for us, but for me it is a labor of love to make sure Jack's papers are preserved and stay together for future Science Fiction fans to study and enjoy.

Ruth did tell me about the two Great Floods. When they were living in Washington State around 1950-1960 the basement of their home flooded on two occasions. Ruth said Jack did not throw a thing away but as I picked up a file folder of papers that had

been glued together with ancient mold I flashed on how the first researcher of the Dead Sea Scrolls must have felt... Just how are we going to unscramble this?

Ruth and I talked photos some more and she told me about some she knew they had of Jack Williamson sitting under their apple tree in the backyard of their first home in Albuquerque. I'll let you know when we find those. We also went into the closet and looked for Jack's beanie hat. We did find one but not the one we were looking for.

Finally I loaded 4 boxes of stuff into the car and headed home. Ruth said it would help her if I would take the boxes home and store them as she goes through stuff, so she has work space. That is fine... I will just make my guest room into Speer Storage Land until we get stuff packed up and out to the library.

Half way home I got waylaid by a traffic jam caused by an accident. I-25 became a parking lot and we all just sat in our cars for close to an hour. I thought, "Gee - what shall I read?" I reached over my shoulder into the backseat and like the "Claw" of a carnival game machine grabbed what was on top and brought it up to see what prize I had won.

In the inch of papers I picked up was -

CORFLU progress report #1 1993  
 Trans Altantic Fan Fund newsletter 1992  
*The Space Collectors Catalog*  
*Scientifiction First Fandom Report* Fall 2001 and Winter 2002  
 ASFACTS NM newsletter May 1993  
 Notes for Bob Peterson #49 March 1993  
 First Fandom Membership Roster 2002  
*DUFF Corroboree* #4 February 1993  
 WABE #1 and #5  
 File 770 #53  
 Minutes of 1984 WSFS Business Meeting  
 Terry Hughes eulogy  
*Science Fiction FiveYearly* Nov 2001

I started reading the Science Fiction FiveYearly and found an article by Greg Benford entitled "How to Write a Scientific Paper". At one point, I was laughing so hard I wondered if my fellow waylaid travelers were worried about the crazy lady in the car beside them, laughing hysterically. That didn't slow me down... I just kept reading and laughing.

I can see that sorting Jack's papers is going to be a wonderful learning experience for me. I'm just sorry he is gone and I can't

share my joy with him.

P.S. - Every zine had pencil corrections by Jack of punctuation and spelling errors. It made me smile every time I saw one.

**Adventures in Speerology #2:** Wow - Y'all are going to get tired of me using the word "Amazing" while I sift through Jack Speer's life in collecting, but if you were with me you too would find that "Amazing" really is the word that keeps coming to mind. I am glad I have y'all to share these stories with because I am busting to talk about it when I get home and I don't want to forget even the smallest detail.

I didn't get over to the Speer home today until close to 5 p.m. It is monsoon season here and around 4 p.m. the skies opened up with a heavy deluge of rain and hail, all accompanied by a spectacular show of lightning. The storm had just let up when I arrived at Jack and Ruth's but the street in front of their house was still channeling a deep stream of rushing water. Ruth met me at the door and commented how their front porch rarely got wet yet here it is covered with several large pools.

The storm had cooled the afternoon so we headed right out to the garage to check out Roy Tackett's papers. But... On the way to the back of the garage we were grabbed by a large tentacled arm and pulled over to a shelf of Pulp. Now I know a lot of you have collected early SF pulps for many a year. I have long read the authors in them but not collected the pulps themselves. Not even handled many of them as most of the Pulp Cons are in areas of the country that I have never lived near and rarely visited. So here Ruth and I are standing in a dusty corner of a dimly lit garage and one by one Ruth would take an

envelope off the shelf, open it, pull out a rare gem cut like a magazine, read the title and date for me, then gently handed me the pulp to look at. Here are a few of the titles she recited to me...

*Amazing Stories* - August 1928; *Wonder Stories Quarterly* - Winter 1932; *Science Wonder Quarterly* - Fall 1929; *Amazing Stories* - October 1927; *Wonder Stories* - March 1933; *Science Fiction Plus* - run of all of 1953; *Wonder Stories Quarterly* - Fall 1931; *Amazing Stories* - October 1930; *Vargo Statton* - January 1954; *Amazing Stories* - April 1926 and September 1926; *Amazing Stories* - May 1932; Terry and the Pirates comics 1950's; *Science Fiction* - October 1939; *Fantastic Novels* - March 1948; *Fantastic Adventures* - September 1952. Also, in an old cigar box there were lots of Buck Rogers comic strips clipped from their original newspapers

Sure - I have seen pulp art in collections of SF art and on-line and I love the images but there is something magically different about seeing them on the original magazines. Maybe it is the old printing techniques, maybe the size of the image, maybe just the wonderful quality of the art itself but I was completely mesmerized. I could have looked at them for hours and wanted to study each painting to see every nuance like on the cover of *Science Fiction Quarterly* - Fall 1929... Wow - These guys in the plump space suits are tethered to an incredibly cool rocket but the rocket is obviously moving because it has a full thrust flame.... etc...etc. So now I get IT - why y'all collect these fragile old magazines. As of this afternoon in Jack Speer's garage, I truly understand.

The issues I mention here are all in surprisingly good shape, some even in excellent tight clean condition. Others on the shelf had

lost covers or been though a flood. But - and you need to remember this - Jack never threw anything away. Ruth said she would occasionally try to throw something away like an old broken lawnmower but Jack would get home just in time to stop this silliness and would lug the lawnmower up to the attic and out of harm's way. I was up in the attic this evening and just the thought of getting a lawnmower up there fills me with respect for Jack's determination.

While we were enjoying the pulps Ruth shared more gold nugget stories about Jack. When looking at one sadly water damaged magazine she said, "This must have been in one of the Oklahoma floods." I said, "There were more floods?" Ruth: "Yes, when Jack was growing up his father did not approve of him reading SF so Jack hid his pulps in the barn and there were occasional floods. The funny thing is that it was Jack's father who introduced Jack to Science Fiction. He felt to be well-rounded you needed to read and learn something about everything. The trouble was that Jack was really struck from the start by Science Fiction and his father only wanted him to sample it for educational purposes." Jack father was a lifetime military man and Ruth said Jack respected and adored him. His father's love of knowledge and learning was forever a part of Jack's life too. Ruth said Jack loved being a boy scout while growing up and loved learning about nature. He also loved digging in the creek - something his father also preferred Jack not do but that did not deter the young Jack from his creek explorations.

Jack's love of learning kept him going to every science talk he could get too his whole life, right up to the end. He always wanted to learn something new and even when they traveled Jack never wanted to take the same path twice. He wanted to find new ways to get there so he might have a new learning experience along the way.

One more note on floods. When the great basement floods happened (mentioned in the first chapter) Ruth said "You should have seen the backyard." Jack filled every inch of their back yard with wet fanzines and pulps to try and sun dry them. He would even walk up and down turning the pages of individual magazines to try and help them dry out. Poor guy - I know how I would feel if my prized books were in a flood. Looking through some of the water-damaged fanzines today I noted that mimeograph ink just turns into illegible lines with dark blue halos when drenched.

Remember Roy Tackett's stuff? We had started out to look at that - well, not quite there yet, next a detour up to the attic. While looking at the pulps I noticed a skinny metal ladder extending up into a dark opening in the ceiling. Who can pass up the allure of that! I asked Ruth if I could climb up and she smiled



**Andrew Porter and Mike Glycer meet Patricia Rogers** before a fanzine panel at Denvention 3.

and said, "Sure - Just be careful." So up I went. First I plugged in an elaborate set of power cords to hopefully bring a little light to the darkness above. Hey, I've read a lot of H.P. Lovecraft - I know what waits in dark attics.

From what Ruth had said about all the stuff Jack had been depositing up there I expected a large finished attic with a floor. Wrong. There are open beams to be tightrope-walked/crawled on with the always-present threat of falling one way or another through the ceiling into the garage below. A few loose boards and old table tops have been placed between some of the beams to help as wobbly stepping stones. Now you think all this would slow me down. Wrong again. My degree is in Anthropology and I did lots of Archeology field work in college. There is nothing I love more than exploring dangerous difficult places while looking for hidden treasure. And from the looks of it this attic fits all those criteria. Even with the couple of power cords only one flashlight-sized bulb worked and I tugged at the cord to try and get the light to reveal the far corners of the attic. There were boxes here and there, hub-caps, an old leather 1940's briefcase and then a later 1970's hard-sided one close by. Way in the back were large bicycle wire rims more like something from a bike in the 1920's. About 8 feet away from me was a small bookcase with what looked like Fantasy Press size books on it but I just could not see well enough to tell. OK - I have to climb over there... slowly. Sigh. They were just 1970's SF paperbacks which had vinyl covers to disguise their true appearance. At the other end of the attic was a box that looked to be full of art but I just could not see what was in it from my distance. I tried to figure out a way to get over there but decided it was going to have to wait for another day with better clothing and more preparation. I did not even open any of the boxes so there are still lots of mysteries to be explored up there.

OK, Really - now to look at Roy's stuff. There are 4 or 5 stacks of file cabinet boxes and each stack is over 6 feet high, all full of fanzines. We just glanced at them but everything seemed to be in good shape and well organized. I will move those out of the garage soon and look though them more thoroughly.

Ruth and I headed into the kitchen and noted the time to be almost 7 p.m. and Ruth said she was going to make us some dinner. She suggest since it was nice and cool that I check out the outbuilding in the backyard



again and maybe I could find some of the papers she is looking for. Ruth and her children have been working very hard the last few weeks to find all the legal papers they need for the estate but as she has smiled and said to me on several occasions, "All we keep finding is Science Fiction papers."

In a serious talk I asked Ruth if she or her children or grandchildren wanted to keep any of the fanzines or fandom papers? Ruth smiled and said no, that her children have come to the point that they have enough stuff in their lives and didn't need to collect anymore. Hummm... Have enough stuff??? "Don't need to collect any more???" I wonder if I will ever grasp this concept. No. Probably not.

In the early evening light I headed out to the shed. Inside there are many boxes neatly lined up, with pathways through them. I checked out a number of drawers and found lots of old video tapes, some games and toys, and lots of fanzines - even some in the boxes marked FAPA. Then I started looking through a box that was marked TBF (To Be Filed, I assume). Not very far in I saw a carbon copy of a letter written by Jack on July 28, 1983. It caught my eye right way because in the first line it mentions *The Futurians*, Harry Warner's books and *The Immortal Storm* but it was the last paragraph that really blew me away. Of all the thousands of letters everywhere around me that I should find this one... Well, maybe Jack is still directing things.

Toward the end of the letter Jack is talking about the task of dealing with the life, works, and possessions of his parents' estate. Jack wrote: "...discarding much, sorting some into categories particular to one of them, their ancestors... ..and keeping some papers and things for such use as I can make of them... But it is melancholy how much meaning has been lost."

And the last paragraph in this letter Jack wrote:

"Perhaps because I expect to live forever, I haven't felt your quiet panic to rush things

onto stencil, but I do feel bad about projects languishing, such as my promised printing of the balance of Swisher's time-travel thesis, and the decimal index of old prozine stories. I think it was May Wollstonecraft Godwin's husband, who died at thirty, who wrote "When I have fears that I shall cease to be Before my pen has gleamed my teeming brain..." (He didn't reach a very profound conclusion.) I suppose

it's better to die before than to keep writing after one has run out of ideas.

"Fen may come and fen may go, but stf goes on forever." - Jack

I will leave you with Jack's words.

**Adventures in Speerology #3:** Jack Speer was a very lucky man. I am just home from spending another wonderful afternoon with the charming Ruth. Now here is a woman who just lost her life companion, best friend, and beloved husband of 57 years. Yet even in her time of grieving she is the perfect hostess: full of life, quick to laugh, and exuding the very essence of *joie de vivre*. A pearl of great price.

We laughed so often in the 3½ hours I was there that even though I am exhausted from running a zillion errands today, Ruth's laughter has energized me... Shouldn't I be giving her my energy? Well, maybe it is mutual.

I told her of all your good wishes and comments on what I have written describing our forays into Jack's ziggurat. I also gave her hard copies of *Speerology* 1 & 2 to read. Now I am the anxious student waiting to find out if I will get a passing grade on my term paper. I gave her veto power on anything I have written before it is committed to paper and asked her to please let me know if I have gotten anything - I used the word "wrong," her more ladylike take was "interpreted incorrectly."

Let me jump back to last night. While washing, packing, cleaning, and doing a myriad of other chores that needed doing in my home before I leave for San Diego early Wednesday, I would occasionally take a few moments out and sift through Jack's 1938 envelope of photos. Some of these photos are very small - postage-stamp size. Ruth says that Jack enjoyed developing and printing them himself, which explains why there are multiple copies of some photos. The pictures are so small that after a while I found myself wandering back to my library/office in search of a loupe so I might better make out



what was in them. One tiny landscape needed no magnifying glass to identify, though it did take my brain a moment to register what I was seeing; with a childlike smile I realized that here was a teensy-tinesy Munchkin-sized photo of the Emerald City. Dorothy and friends have just turned the last corner on the Yellow Brick Road and a breathtaking Emerald City looms before them. The first thing I thought was: "Oh look - Jack took a photo of *The Wizard of Oz* on the TV. All the problems with this statement quickly occurred to me and just as fast I remembered that the movie came out in 1939 and he must have been seeing it in a theater during its opening run. So I pictured our 19-year-old Jack seeing *The Wizard of Oz* for the first time and being so in awe of the futuristic design of the Emerald City that right then and there in the dark theater he pulled out his camera and took a photo of the screen. You can even see the outline of other moviegoers' heads in the foreground. I feel like I know and like him all the better now because of this postage stamp image.

Another image also looked familiar, but took me a few more moments of thought to figure out with its strange spires, angles and shadows. Finally it hit me: here was a photo from a World of Tomorrow, the General Motors "Futurama" ride from the 1939 World's Fair - Jack must have snapped the photo from the chair moving past the models. WOW! So now we have a photo from the time and place of the World Con in 1939! There must be more! There are some photos of individuals standing on what appears to be New York City street corners. Also, there are shots of lots of young men surrounded by paper and books. Maybe just maybe we are on the right track. Really, I will scan these for you when I get back... I promise. There will be prizes for anyone that can identify anybody in the photos... But remember these images are so very small!

I kidded with Ruth that here we have Jack taking photos of everything from *The Wizard of Oz* to the World's Fair - surely there have to be World Con photos!!!! Unless Jack filed them separately... Always a possibility.

Speaking of filing: Ruth and I chatted for a long time and I mentioned Curt's idea of taking documentary photos so we headed off to Jack's office. I got down at the level of his chair and started snapping pictures of Jack's office as he would

have seen it every day. Ruth laughed and said "Wait, he would not have this (mundane) business paper out," and we quickly got out his last mailing of *Synapse*. (Which by-the-way, Robert - Jack had opened and made a file for but had not started to work on yet. Ruth says he never worked on anything until the last possible moment.) I also started taking documentary photos of the myriad of filing cabinets.

After taking several dozen photos we headed to the garage and on the way I grabbed a few shots of the front hall and living room which are, in the words of my mother, "Company Ready". Not a SF zine in sight. Oh, and I did ask Ruth to pose for a photo. She said, "But I'm not a Science Fiction Fan." I came right back and said, "But you are a fan of Jack's!" She laughed and with a soft smile said I had her there and she sat down for the camera.

Once we got to the garage I went right over to the wonderful pulp magazine area and I started opening a few envelopes to place the pulps out for aesthetic picture purposes. Of course the ones I picked up were completely different than those I had seen the other day. All I wanted to do was stop right then and there and open each and every one! But with great determination and strength of will I wrenched myself free after talking only a few photos.

Ruth and I went over to a wall of small file drawers (index card size). We started opening them to peruse the treasures inside - then the laughing started in earnest! Look, this drawer is full of old wallets, and this one is filled with old broken belts, broken eyeglasses in another... Have I mentioned that Jack never threw anything away? I liked the one full of SF pins, badges and name tags. There is more

- like the one full of plastic coffee cups from the late 1960's, but also in there was what I am sure is a Bakelite red and black marbled holder that once held shaving cream circa 1910-1930. So like every good dig, there may be a mountain of oyster shells in your midden, but if you keep looking you may just find a perfect spear point.

We took lots and lots of photos amidst our laughter. I said I had better get some shots of the attic and Ruth asked for the camera so she could take photos of me on the way up. I started to climb and Ruth, standing below me with camera in hand, kept saying - "Just go up one more rung, OK, one more, well, maybe one more so they see your head going up into the dark." I envisioned the classic Grand Canyon scenario: "No, really, Honey - just step back one more step." I took some photos in the attic too and of the garage from that angle.

We dug around for a while longer in drawer after drawer of bill statements that had been paid 25 years past and ancient Christmas holiday giveaways in a festive card - small plastic devices that you could press into you checks like a notary seal that would protect your writing from fraud. There were a bunch of these from some fifty years back. I said to Ruth - "Well, now you are all set for next Christmas."

To escape the heat of the garage we took a cool respite in the lovely green backyard which is complete with fountain and recently-added gazebo. Camera in hand I headed over to the shed to document the plethora of boxes housed there and some of the oh-so-water-damaged files.

Finally we went back into the living room and had another long chat and made a date for next Tuesday July 29 when I am back from Comic Con.

Ruth said during our afternoon conversations that - "Jack tied to squeeze every last bit out of life." Not a bad thing to emulate... I am sure going to try to do the same.

#### Adventures in Speerology

**#4:** Could you feel a wave of excitement ripple through the force around 8 p.m. Wednesday (July 30th) night? While covered in dust and fearing every moment my large beam was going to fall though the smaller attic beams, I spotted a box half-hidden under debris in Jack Speer's attic. All I could see was the word "Robot". Now, I LOVE tin Robots. My back room is decorated in "Early Robot and Rocketship Prime." I



**Jack Speer and Bob Tucker** at Ditto 14/Fanhistoricon in 2001. (Photo by Keith Stokes)

audibly gasped when I saw that tantalizing word, while trying to keep my balance and keep hold of a small flashlight - its beam now shining on the object of my desire. I shakily slid along the rafters, inching closer, and started to clear away the strata covering the box. Reaching in, I gently pulled the cardboard treasure up from its niche between ceiling boards and read "Sensor Robot 20." Hoping for the Gort/Robbie of my dreams I opened the box. Life is full of surprises and even though this was not the robot I was envisioning, it was still pretty cool. Here was a flat sensor board with a picture of a robot in the center and all around it was studded with lights and dials. They are labeled "Magnet Sensor," "Light Sensor," "Touch Sensor" and "Voice Sensor." He has red light-up eyes and a large blue dial at his robot's heart. Plus, a master control dial and reset switch on the base. On the back is a colorful circuit board - which our guy Jack has already wired up for us.

The box says that our "Sensor Robot 20" can:

- Perform 20 different experiments
- Responds to light, sound, magnetism, and moisture
- No previous electronic knowledge required
- Large display board complete with all parts
- Requires one 9V battery

OK - insert "caffeinated drink" for "9V battery" and I resemble that description on a good day. My new "sensitive" well-wired pal and I had lots in common.

Oh yeah. I am still balanced on a small board in a warm dark attic and have other tasks at hand - but let's go back to the beginning of the evening.

On my way over to the Speer's I stopped at Whole Foods and picked up a little supper for Ruth and I. Noodle salad with cucumber & sesame oil and roasted turkey. Ruth and I sat on the couch in the den and chatted for a while about politics, news, family matters and events, then we got out some plates and headed for the dining room table. Being with Ruth is like being with my mother or my next-door neighbor (Mary Noel) while growing up. These women were ladies in every sense of the word. All my proper childhood manners bubble their way back up to the surface. Dinner is in the dining room at a table with mahogany chairs. There is no TV, DVD, CD, computer screen, iPod, Nintendo Wii, cell phone, or stereo to distract us. Just two people talking in a pleasant quiet room. I sit up straight, no elbows on the table, put my napkin in my lap and try to act like the lady my mother hoped I would be. And you know what? - It is nice. We look at each other and really listen to what the other person has to say. Time stands still in an oasis

of gentility.

While we were talking Ruth mentioned an SF painting with two moons that her son Ed remembers Jack owning but Ruth does not recall. On the wall behind us is another very nice SF painting of intrepid astronauts exploring a mysterious world. (This is the only hint of Science Fiction in the living room.) Ruth also mentioned her daughter is looking for a Victorian painting of a cat peering over a chair. This painting had been in her room as a child but it had frightened her and was taken down. Now, like so many things that scare us (in a good way), she wanted it back. I mentioned the box of art I had seen in the attic and that maybe - just maybe - those two pieces of art were up there. So we picked up our plates to deposit them in the kitchen and headed out to the garage.

Last week while I was away at Comic-Con, Ruth had been diligently organizing the Pulp. Three large boxes of them! They are now in date order and seem to be complete runs of magazines such as *Amazing Stories* from the beginning through the 1930's. Many of them multiple copies!

On an aside - I just want y'all to know how much I must want to bring these adventures to you because right now, In My Living Room, are all three of these boxes of pulps and I am dying to look through them. I sit here typing away at the computer and I can hear their mysterious stories and riveting art calling me from the other room. Loudly Calling! I am going to bag, rate for condition, and help Ruth to sell them, but for a little while at least I can enjoy their company.

After Ruth showed me all her work on the pulps I loaded them into my car along with some beat-up water-damaged old books (nothing special here - really) which I will take for recycling. We figured if on every trip I take some trash it will help to clean out the garage.

Now - up to the attic. Ruth found me a flashlight and with a playful grin wished me luck and said not to fall because she couldn't catch me. I tried plugging in a host of wires and managed to get one of the lights to work. The other was a bulb in a wire cage and after much struggling with the cage I was able to extract the old bulb and put in another - still no go. Guess the flashlight would have to be my main source of light.

The attic fan was blowing a helpful breeze though the opening, which alleviated some of the stuffy heat. I stood there on the ladder trying to figure out how to place small cross boards on the beams to be able to crawl over to my goal. After moving some boards around and vaguely thinking, "Well - maybe this will hold me... Maybe..." I crawled up. I swung the flashlight into corners I had not seen the last time I was up there. Hub caps - lots of hub caps and suitcases everywhere.

Say - Way over there under the rafters - Isn't that the suitcase George Bailey got as a going-away gift in *It's a Wonderful Life*? I moved slowly towards the box of frames and papers.

The first thing I pulled out was a framed cardboard print of poppies, then a rolled photo of the well-suited gentlemen of the Oklahoma Supreme Court circa 1948. Next up was a small rectangular mirror from around 1910 in an oak frame painted forest green; the patterns of dust on the mirror's surface made it look like it had been inscribed with hieroglyphs. Next to this was a watercolor from the same era, of an idyllic mountain scene with sheep grazing on a hillside, a mountain and waterfall behind them. Could any painting be more appropriate for a bedroom to lull you into a restful sleep? That was it for the art but I did rather like a large poster I found in the same box that said "Nuts" and the one under it that said, "Pecans - Toasted and Cracked to Perfection". Our Jack was a good southern boy, wasn't he! Sadly, no cat or moons paintings here.

I gathered up the mirror, poppies, and sheep and set them closer to the opening so I could take them down to show Ruth. Then I started to look around again with my flashlight.

So - this is where old electronics go to die! A reel-to-reel tape deck from around 1960 stared blankly at me and I thought what a good costume Robot head it would make. It was wedged between an early video camera (1975) and a single slide projector (1945). In a box nearby was a cast iron pedal-type "White" sewing machine and on the other side a broken Koo-Koo-Clock with little Black Forest men holding up its sides. I looked more closely at the wire wheels I had seen from a distance the last time. There were also wheel hubs here, and even long deflated inner tubes. On the other side of the attic I could see a box of old chemical bottles and glass acid bottles with glass stoppers, maybe from when Jack was developing his own photos. I then spotted my sensitive robot pal. I put his box over on top of my pile of frames and had one last look around in which I saw what I think was a turn-of-the-century white enamel chamber pot buried deep in the rafters.

Time to head back down. When telling Ruth of what I had seen in Dead Electronic Land like the tape deck, camera and projector, she punctuated each item as I named it with the word, "Broken." And she smiled. (Maybe you didn't know this already - Jack never threw anything away.)

We took our artifacts into the kitchen and dusted them off. The mirror was lovely and once polished seemed to reflect better than the mirrors of today. Maybe some kind of

old silvering process. The Sheep painting was a Lyday Photogravure - I need to look that up.

While cleaning things up we looked at a few comics Ruth had pulled out of the stacks of pulps. "Barnaby Quarterly - The Comic with a High IQ" (1945); Barnaby seems to be a plump fellow with wings. Also in the stack

were several "Felix the Cat" Popular Comics (1945). And, lastly a 1960's reprint of a 1930's Walt Disney coloring book. As Ruth and I looked through them we could not help but laugh as we noticed that Jack had made notations in shorthand even in these! On the cover of one of the Popular Comics was a

drawing of a suave character named "Smilin' Jack." The thought that instantly sprang to mind when I saw this drawing was: I just know our Jack was "Smilin'" at us as we laughed.

## How Tall Is the Hugo?

**By Mike Glycer:** How tall is the Hugo rocket? As a matter of fact, a chrome Hugo rocket is thirteen inches tall. But what I am really asking you to do is put your imagination to work, then tell me: What sized rocket do you think the Hugo is modeled on?

John Hertz and I came up with this question while we were discussing the spate of silly controversies that plagued Nippon 2007's Hugo Awards. The last one was about the Hugo Award base. From all the griping you'd think the Japanese superhero Ultraman practically dwarfed the Hugo rocket.

A lot of fans thought it was perfectly fine for a Japanese Worldcon to honor an icon from its country's sf tradition. But for or against, all fans seemed to take for granted that the figure of Ultraman was exaggerated. No one ever asked whether Ultraman and the rocket might, in fact, be in proper proportion to one another, or how to find that answer.

Ultraman is supposed to be 130 feet tall. Just how big do we conceive the Hugo rocket to be?

In the popular imagination the hypothetical, life-sized Hugo rocket has taken on mythic proportions with the passing years.

To honor the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Worldcon, the 1989 Hugo Award base took inspiration from the signature buildings of the 1939 New York World's Fair, the Trylon and Perisphere. Connected to the Trylon, which stood 700 feet tall, by what was at the time the world's longest escalator, was the Perisphere, 180 feet in diameter. So in the 1989 base design the Hugo rocket stood in for a 700-foot-tall tower.

Three years later, Phil Tortoricci designed the 1992 Hugos, with special gold-plated rockets on his beautifully-made bases. He hand-painted an astronomical scene on each black stone backdrop. The rockets rested on little squares of orange grating from the original Pad 29 where America's first satellite was launched. That was the Explorer-1 satellite launched on a multi-stage Jupiter-C rocket in 1958. I'm sure that by 1992 fans were used to seeing historic footage of missions launched with the huge Saturn V rocket, 363 feet tall (shorter than the Trylon, but still mighty big.) In fact, the rocket that launched our first

satellite was just 71 feet tall – something Ultraman actually could tower over!

The fairest measure of the relative size of Ultraman and the Hugo rocket can be found by identifying the rocket ship that inspired the Hugo design.

The official Hugo Awards site says, "The earliest Hugo Award trophies used a rocket hood ornament from a 1950s American automobile..." Hopefully that will soon be corrected – accurate information is already posted elsewhere on the same site about Jack McKnight's role in manufacturing the first Hugos.

Milton Rothman, chair of the 1953 Philadelphia Worldcon that invented the Hugo Awards, said in his article for the *Noreascon Three Program Book* that they had a lot of trouble finding someone to make the Hugo rockets. "It was Jack McKnight who came to the rescue. An expert machinist, he turned the little rockets out of stainless steel in his own shop, learning to his dismay that soldering stainless steel fins was a new art. While doing this, poor Jack missed the whole convention, but turned up just in time for the banquet and the presentation."

The use of hood ornaments wasn't proposed until the Hugos (which missed a year) were revived in 1955 by the Cleveland Worldcon committee. They hoped Jack McKnight would make their Hugo rockets, too, but their letters brought no replies. Nick Falasca asked, couldn't they simply use Oldsmobile "Rocket 88" model hood ornaments? They ordered one of the ornaments from the local dealer. Unfortunately, the rocket had a hollow underside; hood ornaments did not prove to be a cheap and easy solution after all. Instead, Ben Jason had the Hoffman Bronze Co. prepare a pattern rocket from his design, and that rocket does bear a resemblance to the 88 logo from the trunk lid of a 1955 Oldsmobile "Rocket 88." That's the Hugo rocket shape in use to this day.



(Left) Nippon 2007 Ultraman Hugo base; (Middle) Image of Trylon and Perisphere on 1939 stamp; (Right) Original 1953 Hugo.



Milton Rothman said Jack McKnight's original stubby-winged 1953 Hugo rocket was inspired by Willy Ley. Presumably he meant the cover of Ley's 1949 book, *The Conquest of Space*. The original Hugo rocket looked more or less like the Moon rocket Chesley Bonestell painted for the cover of Ley's book. The general impression is of a rocket about the same size as used in the 1950 movie *Destination Moon*, for which Bonestell also did the matte and scene paintings. We know that the Luna, flown in *Destination Moon*, was 45 meters or 150 feet tall. (Bonestell's image has never ceased to fascinate Hugo designers: the cinematic Moonscape of the 1996 Hugo base, with Hugo rocket in the foreground, pays homage to *Destination Moon*.)

In the end, the fairest and most logical answer is that our hypothetical Hugo is the same size as *Destination Moon*'s Luna, 150 feet tall. That makes the Hugo similar in size to the legendary Ultraman, and allows us to conclude the Nippon 2007 base shows the two images in proper proportion. Case closed.

# The Fanivore

Chris Garcia

Vegas. I'm going in less than 14 hours and I still don't have my rental car. It's a shame I never plan more than one step ahead. I've got 150 copies of the Newsletter that'll hit the tables of the JW Marriott the moment my feet hit the cool marble of the lobby. I live close to the edge of these things. Driving in and arriving just as the convention starts is a bad idea if you're running the newsletter and the fanzine lounge, but I've never been one to shy away from bad ideas now, have I?

And all of this is merely introduction to my LoC, which I'll start any moment now, as the PDF rolls itself through my slow as AOL dial-up in the mid-1990s PC, currently over-taxed with excessive computer history material like the PDF of an article about the Design Augmented by Computer (DAC) system from GM in the 1960s, or the video of Katy Perry's I Kissed A Girl that I've got on repeat via YouTube. Sometimes FANAC is hindered by the availability of fun videos and actual work. Such is my lot.

That article is actually really interesting, and I know that the PDF of *File 770* will open at any moment, but alas, it is slowly rolling down the gorgeous cover that Taral put together. I'm a detective guy. It's odd that I'm so much more a detective fan than a science fiction fan when it comes to reading, but I can't get enough of the combination of the two. Robert J. Sawyer did some great detective-type novels. Of course, they had Robert J. Sawyer-type endings which made them a slight step down, but then something like *The Yiddish Policeman's Union* comes along and rocks my socks. This is the kind of cover that really gets me.

And now there's enough of the PDF for me to start reading and commenting...but of course, there's a new distraction: the new girl who has the cube across from me. She's asking me what I'm working on and I tell her an eMail to a friend who writes a zine. She did zines back in the 1990s, like every other girl who's kinda cute and wore glasses did at the time. She said the highlight of her life was seeing it listed in *Fact Sheet Five*. I know other people who feel the same. I don't think I ever read any of her stuff, though I read a lot of zines back in those days. It was a RiotGrrl zine, which wasn't exactly in my wheelhouse.

She's gone.

OK, this clubhouse matter. I've said it on record, if I ever find myself with 4 million dollars in my hot little hands, two million



goes to paying taxes (or relocating to some county without extradition or income taxes), one million is used to buy me a really comfortable sedan that will be converted to electric and also paying most of my student loans, and then that final million will be to buy BASFA a clubhouse. A million isn't that much any more, but it could still buy a small place around these parts.

Anyhow, if we have many more meetings like the one last Monday where Andy Trembley and Kevin Roche were married by yours truly and we managed to bring more than 200 bucks into the coffers.

Oh man, I've got a call. This'll take a moment. It's the lovely and talented Linda! We've gotta go over what we're doing on the trip to Vegas. I'm driving and she's sleeping in the car. That means no Speed Metal on the way down, which will mean less of a high-octane adrenaline-fueled thrill ride on the way down.

Bill Wright is one of the great folks I met while I was a part of ANZAPA and I think Meteor Inc. is a really good idea. Can't go wrong trying to preserve stuff in my eyes. I love his zine, *Interstellar Ramjet Scoop*, and I hope I'll get to meet the fellow sometime. He has supported my addiction to Aussie Rules Football as well.

Good to hear that Rusty's doin' OK. I know his son, he's a BASFAn too. This may be the most mentions of BASFA in any zine other than the *Drink Tank* or *Science Fiction San Francisco*. Well done! Our tentacular tentacles are tentacling mightily!

Great. More eMails. This'll take a second. Oh hey, it's one from Jason Schachat, my

good pal who's joining in on Westercon fun!

You know, I don't get it when folks say someone isn't fannish enough. I just don't get what that means. Does it mean that a 'fan' is actually a 'pro' in disguise? I can't figure it out. There is always the problem of TAFF going to someone who isn't a Fanzine Fan. One thing that I'm desperately trying to make sure happens is that TAFF breaks away from the idea that it's just a fund for Fanzine Fandom. I think it needs to be a part of the Big Tent of Fandom and that's the best way to make sure it survives.

Hey, it's a mail from Dave Locke, who is also the target of the piece on the return of *Pixel/Time & Again*. I've sent him an article for the next issue, returning Found In Collection to the electronic pages of a fanzine. I'll miss Dave Burton's work though. He's really good at what he does!

And congrats to the Glyers for being Super-Awesome! If you read "Handicapping The Hugos," you'll see that I expect there to be another Rocket on the mantel of the Glycer household!

Speaking of the HTH issue, you guys put together some interesting thoughts. Of course, since you don't find total agreement with my initial announcements, I am forced to either agree with your decisions or denounce you and James as some sort of Warlock cahootery. I will choose the latter. I really don't stand a chance. I was dead last in both categories last year, don't have 1/5 the readership of any of the other zines or writers and basically am not the fannish household name that a Dave Langford, John Scalzi, *Challenger* or *File 770* are. I'm just hoping

that I beat No Award. If I manage that, and I didn't on the first ballot last year, I'll be quite happy.

Robert Silverberg is my definition of Classy. I like Mike Resnick, though I've almost never interacted with him outside of buying stuff off of eBay that turns out to be from him.

You know, I've known Glenn for ages but I don't think I've ever met Alison. These things happen. The next week was that marriage week at BASFA and Glenn's wedding sounded like a lot of fun. This seems to be the year of the Fannish wedding as I've done 2 of them and there were 3 others that were certainly fannish.

Must try and meet Steve and Sue Francis at Westercon...or WorldCon...or somesuch. We Fan Fund Administrators have to stick together, you know!

Must run to Tom Jones' Birthday lunch. It's Chevy's, and therefore, I must not miss it.

OK, I'm back. I'm a little too full to do good commentary, but I'll give it a go. Every *File 770* is worthy of...wow, I am so stuffed. I mean, I figured that having a 4 item combo, a flautas appetizer and some flan was a tad much, but wow, I am full. I might take a little nap.

I'm totally voting for South Gate in 2010. It's my fannish duty!

As an expert (or someone who can convincingly fake that he's an expert) on AI, I can say that those tips are hit and miss. First off, absolutely correct about not letting it out onto the internet, but only because it'll spend all of it's time looking at LolCats and playing internet dominos on Yahoo. Second, you should ask all those questions of any applicant for the position of Programmer of God-like Machines, but I'd also ask if they previously worked for Microsoft, Google or Earthlink. If they have, that Plasma Cannon might be the right idea. Also, once you've got the AI, give it a cutesy name. May I recommend something like CHiP or pOSey?

OK, now I must run and get my car and go to Vegas, so I will end this kinda short. I love the stuff from Mary and Eric. I've read one of the books and it was a delight. That CorFlu review seems like it was a good time. I wish I had been able to go.

[[Chris, your loc left me in tears of laughter. Nothing's more fun about editing a fanzine than getting locs like yours.]]

## Marie Rengstorff

Dear Mars Rock & Family: It all made perfect sense to me. I would like to add that *File 770:153* was really professional and informative. I'm impressed. And learned a lot.

Then there is the spelling issue – I never know witch which is watt, but I have no trou-

ble with stuff like formicivorous or Australopithecine Afarensis. All English majors hate my spelling. In truth, I will never understand why it is so upsetting. One hundred years from now, many words will have strange new spellings. First and last vowels are dropping by the wayside at an accelerated rate.

Today I am helpless in Prescott. I own a condo here. I consider it a family vacation home, but the family was not interested in the last few years, so I rented it out. The renters left this lovely 5000/6000 ft. elevation in Arizona for Ohio. They left my little nest in the mountains with \$10,000 worth of damage. No appliance, plumbed device, wall, ceiling or sq. ft. of floor was left in one piece.

The saving grace is the quality of olde Westerners in AZ. My plumber is an artist, poet and man of honor. He stayed for two hours today, but only charged for one. He did two jobs for the price of one. And we studied his photography. I do not exaggerate when I say, his is the most exciting photography I have ever seen. We also discussed the Professional Writers of Prescott group. And, we ended with a bit from SFWA Bulletin saying the average SF writer makes/made \$2,000 a year. We are both happy we have other skills and talents, ones that make decent money. (What do you and your plumber talk about?) Don't worry, he had, prior to today, charged me for seven hours.

Somehow, over the last three weeks, I have managed to *almost* return this place to a charmer. My lanai (? I'm from Hawaii. What do I know?) hangs out over a creek. I think I'm supposed to day my deck hangs out over an arroyo. What ever it is, sure is pretty. In the distance is Granite Mountain.

While I was balancing hardware store shopping, pipe and natural gas specialists (I

do the electrical), painting, hole patching, screen door fixing, etc. I managed to finish the first draft of a short story.

You know, Master, that we pay for such successes. This morning I twisted my foot while climbing down from removing a curtain rod. Can you picture a curtain rod, very expensive quality, recently put up, stationed in such a way that the fabric had to drape over the vertical blind rod between the strips of plastic. Needless to day, that curtain rod had no drapes on it. The location was 95% idiotic and 95% impossible. The other 5% ordered Harry Potter.

Anyway, four hours later I crawled into the kitchen to ice and tape my foot. Any injury that takes four hours to swell is not critical. However, she added, feet are so fussy. You hurt them and they mock you: "Ha, ha on you," they laugh. "You can't do anything but sit here and write a pen-blog." (I believe this used to be called a LoC.)

Two rounds of ice in a zip-lock bag and making tape later, I'm back in business.

Aloha from Arizona, Marie.

## Eric Mayer

There's some very interesting material in *File 770:153*. James Bacon's account of his South African target practice was fascinating, even though I have no use for firearms. (Do I dare admit that in public?) Mind you, I used to love cap guns. My friends and I reenacted the gunfight at the O.K. corral endlessly. And I had a series of realistic play rifles too. But, as in many other areas of my personality my childhood "normalcy" vanished around the time I entered my teens never to return. My dad took me out to a quarry once and in-



structed me on using a .22. I recall taking one shot, coming nowhere near the tin can sitting on the rock. I don't even recall seeing a puff of dirt. I suspect I missed the whole quarry. That was the end of my involvement with guns. Oh, well, I never wanted to run for president anyway.

Also, I enjoyed your article on Mike Resnick and Robert Silverberg and the art of toastmastership, which is also odd because I've never been to an sf convention. (At least you didn't really tax me by running a report on a gun collectors convention) Still, I loved the comparisons with Astaire and Kelly. I preferred Fred. He's one of my heroes. (And, yeah, you guessed it -- I don't dance either. I mean, what is this with me?) Even though I have never seen a toastmaster at work I could visualize the process and understand the requirements from what you wrote. At least from the limited perspective of someone who has a hard time even speaking in public. I have been on a couple of panels at mystery conventions but as I was not a moderator I had only to answer questions which was kind of like being back in school again.

I liked Taral's covers also. And in this case that isn't entirely weird because I do read some mysteries and indeed even some P.I. books. Although I doubt that Mike Hammer has a tail. To tell the truth I don't think Mike would get on very well with Taral's P.I. He would probably just smile but it wouldn't be a nice smile. However the covers are nicely done.

You offer a great compendium of fan news, even if some ran first on your blog. Surely you get more traffic than you indicate? It seemed to me that the blog would help replace Trufen which seemed to me a wonderful idea that never took off. Being pretty much out of the loop, though, I don't have much to offer by the way of discussing the issues of the day, which, all considered, is probably just as well.

There does seem to be a fair amount of sniping in your loccol, which is what is called a lively loccol I guess. I must say that the whether an author like John Scalzi (or

anyone else) is blogging just for publicity, as Martin Morse Wooster mentions, is a lot harder to say than Martin indicates. John's blog is obviously -- to me -- a creative endeavor in its own right. However, writers are under intense pressure both from their publishers, and the reality of needing to sell enough to stay published, to get the word out about their books. I started my blog because blogging just seemed like a neat idea, a place where I could pawn off on people the sorts of essays I always did for *Groggy*. But I do display the cover of our latest book on the blog and often talk about the books and writing. In part it is because that's about the only interesting aspect of my life right now and in part it's because, yes, I want people to know about the books and maybe buy them so that I have the opportunity to keep writing. As fans we take pride in our zines, writing, art, don't we? Heck, those who put on conventions publicize the cons. They want people to show up. It's a complicated question. I'd actually be more disturbed by someone conflating fan Hugos with professional Hugos for marketing purposes.

### Jerry Kaufman

Looks like the charming Taral front cover and the slightly risqué back cover are meant to go together - Taral might want to do a few more drawings to show how the characters got from one to the other. Gee, now that I've had this thought, I can see how you could have sprinkled the in-between drawings throughout the issue. But it's all moot now. Anyway, with the client in that interesting posture on the back cover, my sometimes nasty mind jumps to the next drawing.

You had a lot of interesting material in this issue - I liked your comparison of Silverberg's and Resnick's styles. Somehow I have missed every Worldcon at which Mike Resnick was the Master of Ceremonies, though. I have, on the other hand, been at some of the cons at which Bob was compeer, and enjoyed his style. Harlan, Tad Williams and Connie Willis have all done good jobs in their various styles. I do remember the fracas at St. Louiscon; one interesting bit of trivia is that the fan who fell through the movie screen was costumed as Charlie Brown of Peanuts - he was right in character.

I read three or four of the John the Eunuch series, and enjoyed reading more about Eric and Mary's research and thinking about writing

the books.

Corflu Silver is turning out to be one of the more widely reported and described conventions of recent years. Right after *File 770* came in, we received Sandra Bond's *Quasi-Quote*, in which the report is mixed with her description of a more personal journey. I recommend it.

As for your report, I liked that you sometimes turned a jaundiced eye on the proceedings. Aren't we fanzine producers and readers and historians the most important thing going in fandom? What's sci-fi got to do with it? These are slightly sarcastic questions, but I think you caught that the Corflu core attendees asked these questions without the tongue in the cheek.

The remark aimed at Randy, "That won't change," was sarcastic, I'm sure. But that will change. Even if Randy's able to delegate all the convention work, he'll find that just delegating and getting the work to stay delegated is work in itself. But we're good at this sort of thing in our neck of Seattle fandom. Give us a small con like Potlatch or Corflu, and we almost do it in our sleep.

I'm going to recommend to everyone that we collect reports like yours and Sandra's and study them so we don't put on Corflu Zed in our sleep. We should wake the con up and plunge all fandom into ecstasy. Or something.

See you at Worldcon, perhaps?

### Brad Foster

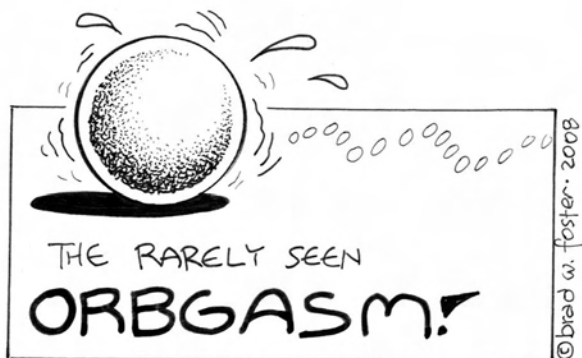
Was sorry to see I didn't even get WAHfEd this issue, but it just goes to show what I've always said, it's not my locs that keeps me on mailing lists! So to keep up my end of "the usual" here, you'll find attached four brand new, fresh from the drawing board fillos for your use.

Been playing around more with the color work, and just finished a new pice for the Reno 2011 bid to be used on T-shirts that I think turned out nicely. I'll always draw in pen and ink, like the look and feel of that too much. But starting to enjoy getting my feet wet in color, a field I've not done that much in for most of my life. Look at me, maw, I got crayolas!

### Eunice Probert

Hi! I enjoyed reading File 770-153 in pdf form. Though I knew I must be getting old when I adjusted the zoom setting to 150%!

The photo of the children being Martian rocks is lovely. My nextdoor neighbour is the senior lecturer in the Solar System Physics





research group at Aberystwyth university and his office is just along the corridor from the folk who were involved in the British Martian project.

Will blogging kill fanzines? It's certainly helped to push personal websites back. Over the last few years I've seen personal websites become nothing more than a blog, a collection of fanlistings and a basic bio.

Personal websites used to be like, well, like fanzines. They'd be a collection of articles, stories, artwork etc and the "news" bit, the journalling, was a just a small part. You can still find traditional personal websites here and there. They are mostly built by older women and tend to be heavy on the sentimentality.

What I find really annoying is the increase in blogs that are sponsored. I don't mind blogs such as dooce.com by Heather Armstrong, that have been around a long time and built up a healthy reputation. But now everyone and their dog wants to get in on the act and believes that they too can make enough money to be able to do nothing but blog, just from their sponsors and advertising.

(Sorry it's so short, but I'm rubbish at writing locs. In my defence, I haven't written one in over 20 years!)

### David Thayer

I enjoy your keeping me on your mailing list despite my extremely low fannish output.

Changing my attending name from Teddy Harvia to David Thayer for WorldCon has had unexpected consequences. Since it appeared to Denvention 3 programming that Teddy was not coming, they sent him no invitation to participate. Since David Thayer is an unknown, they sent him no invitation to participate. At the last minute, I recruited

David Brin and Bob Eggleton for a Pictionary clone. I have Robert Sawyer anticipating and interested in a similar panel at Anticipation.

I did create a couple of new cartoons to illustrate a Chris Garcia one-shot for Denvention 3. I would have drawn you one or two if you'd asked.

### Eve Ackerman

I just wanted to drop you a note to let you know how much I enjoyed the recent issue. I left it for my husband, Howard Rosenblatt, to help prep him for Denvention. After 25 years of staying home with the children so I could have five hedonistic days of SF revelry each year at Worldcon, he's a neo-convention fan (but not a neo-con) who's now enjoying the Hugo Ceremonies, programming and (Ghu help us!) the WSFS business meeting as we travel to Worldcon together. Your 'zine helps bring him up to speed on a lot of fan events and fan history.

Regards to Diana and Sierra. Keep up the good work, and I'll see you in Denver,

### John Purcell

I realize this is an issue late, but still: congratulations on 30 years of fan pubbing! This zine has had an incredible run, and I stand – or sit, to be precise – in awe of your devotion and enjoyment of producing this zine. Good luck with the Fan Hugo voting this year.

Getting the nod for the Best Fanzine Hugo nomination is quite the honor. When you and James Bacon were commiserating on the nominees I basically agreed with your dual assessments, especially considering the chances Chris Garcia has for winning an

award. His visibility is definitely an asset, especially since it is my long-running opinion that the Fan Hugos are more of a popularity contest based on name recognition. *Plotka's* nomination – granted, it's a fun zine and I always enjoy reading it – is only because the cabal produced just the one issue last year, and the voting members know its name. The same goes for the other zines: *Challenger*, *Drink Tank*, *Argentus*, and *File 770* are all fine fanzines and are all propelled by high name-recognition. To me, that's just not right. I feel that the best fanzines of 2007 were *Prolapse*, *Pixel*, and *eI*, and none of those made the short list. Oh, well.

[[Glad to know how that high name-recognition thing works, too, though could you explain about *File 770* not even being nominated in 2007? Does the well-knownness of *File 770's* name fluctuate, like *IQ* does in Poul Anderson's novel *Brainwave*? What a great relief to know that my absence from the ballot had nothing to do with something like voters thinking somebody did a better fanzine.]]

Be that as all this may be, the five zines nominated are definitely good ones, but not exactly representative of the field. The FAAn Awards are, IMHO, so I guess that to me it doesn't matter which zine wins the Fanzine Hugo. They are all good ones, and for some reason I kind of hope that *Argentus* wins. Why, I dunno; maybe that's because it's the one of the better sercon zines being pubbed. Notably missing here are *Steam Engine Time* and *\*brg\**, which are two more fantastic zines. Yeesh...

Yeah, the bottom line is that 2007 was a good year for fanzines. Electronic or otherwise, the field is quite hale and hearty, and I am humbled to be in their company and am enjoying the show. Good luck to all nominees this year!

Which reminds me: I haven't read any of the fiction nominees! Not a one. Same thing for the dramatic presentation categories. Color me an uninformed voter – but then again, I'm not even a supporting member of the WorldCon. Maybe next year.

I really loved that article about Robert Silverberg and Mike Resnick. The only two Worldcons I attended – MidAmeriCon and IguanaCon – didn't feature either man being toastmaster, but I have long heard of Silverberg's smoothness and great delivery in this regard. This was a wonderful article, Mike, and is probably my favorite in this entire issue. Good stuff! Thank you for taking the time and effort to write it. I really enjoyed it.

And while I have the zine open in front of me – yes, I made a print copy – that picture of Mike Resnick and Janis Ian autographing books made me gasp. "That couldn't be the singer, could it?" I wondered aloud. So guess what? I googled in the name, and lo and be-

hold, it most certainly is! Okay... Now I have someone else's fiction to search out and read! At this rate, heaven better have a dang good SF & F library, because I am going to be reading well into the afterlife.

One final note: I have been meaning to order up some of the John the Eunuch mysteries, and that marvelous interview with Eric Mayer and Mary Reed convinced me even more to do so. These books sound so interesting, and historical mysteries are one of my favorite reading categories lately.

So many thanks for the fine issue, Mike, and I am sorry I missed out on meeting you at Corflu Silver. You would have found me lurking in the virtual consuite there, and I had a great time heckling the banquet eaters and listening in on the panels, music, speechifying, and FAAn Awards. Bill and Roxanne Mills most certainly deserved their special award from us virtual attendees.

Until next time, enjoy thyself and I look forward to another installment.

**Greg Prickman**

I always enjoy reading *File 770*, and have in particular noticed the recent posts you've distributed from Patricia Rogers as she is sorting through Jack Speer's collections. I work at the University of Iowa where we have a large collection of science fiction fanzines and apazines, probably the second-largest in the nation. In reading Patricia's accounts, I haven't seen any mention of a specific destination for Jack's materials. Perhaps I'm coming in to this midstream, and arrangements have already been made, but I thought I'd write and gently inquire about the future of the collection. As a fan myself, I am trying to build our collections, and would imagine Jack's material would be a great addition. It would also be an honor to help preserve the collection and make it accessible to others, while promoting Jack's legacy and his important role in fandom.

If in fact arrangements have already been made for the collection, then please disregard this message. If not, and you feel that Patricia or the Speer family would be interested in exploring some options, I would appreciate it if you could pass my message along to them. Thanks for your help.

**Joseph T. Major**

**Editorial Notes:** Why do two percent of those setting out to buy "12 O'Clock High"



buy a Harry Potter book? Because the colonel took Harry's grandfather up for a flight once and he said "Bloody queer to do this *in* something."?

**Mars Geological Features:** Given Lewis's attitude about this, one wonders if his reaction wouldn't have been similar to that of Tolkien's to the well-meaning but not-quite-thinking-it-through fan who sent him a steel goblet with the Ring inscription engraved around the rim. (Nowadays, the Ring inscription would be something on the order of "LOL I PWN ELVEZ !!!111!!!")

**No Jail for "Darth Vader":** "He had just drunk most of a 10-liter box of wine." The Force must be strong in him, for most people would be passed out after that.

**And the Prix Aurora...** This is hardly new. Back in the early nineties, when there were a lot of good CanZines out there, and a WorldCon in Canada, none of them even got close to being nominated.

As for the best electronic fanac, the problem is that the best blogger of year n will probably be burned out by year n+1. Or his blog may now be devoted to mosaic pictures of construction cranes, or something else equally mundane.

**Toastmasters:** I understand that that infamous 1968 Hugo Awards ceremony was only the capstone of a hellish con. Jack Chalker started telling the story of that con at a Worldcon panel. He described the Masquerade in excruciating detail, including the three rock bands and the truckload of incense, the rioters outside, Bob Bloch lighting a cigarette... The panel ran out of time. I hoped to see Jack at the next con and find out some more. **BUT HE DIED!**

**Ten Rules for Building an AI That**

**Won't Kill You:** Didn't I see an earlier version of this on the "Milton the Monster Show"?

**Fanivore:** Mark Leeper: When Milius had the cinema showing "Alexander Nevsky" I think he was having the Soviets being unwittingly self-defeating. The movie was for the Russian troops, not for the Americans, who wouldn't be admitted and probably wouldn't know what it was about, even if they could speak Russian.

And in conclusion, a fanzine note. I installed Windows XP^TM SM © (R) Bill Gates is GOD! Service Pack 3 on my computer. It crashed and required a recovery. The recovery preserved every file save one; the Outlook email file. So I lost my email list for *Alexiad*. Anyone wanting to get back on the list, or get on the list, please

email me at the address Our Kindly Editor will so kindly provide in the proper place.

**Lloyd Penney**

Thank for another *File 770*. Another wonderful Taral cover (he's been very visible lately) is followed by your own modern research secrets. Is this fanzine a collection of blog-gish articles you've been publishing online for the past few months? That and more, I hope. I land on File770.com most weekday evenings at work. More further inside...I am using both the paperzine you sent to me, and the .pdf. There's a couple of unreadable patches in the repro.

(I started this before Denvention, but have only been able to get to it now...I guess you'll see this when you get back. With at least one Hugo, I hope.)

Yvonne's done one thing I've never been able to do...visit the LASFS clubhouse. I'd like nothing better than to have a look and spend some time during an evening or meeting. Toronto doesn't even have a central club or society, so the point is moot, and with property prices in Toronto skyrocketing, ownership by any group here would be out of the question.

Chris Garcia has my US\$20 for his TAFF report...I still think it would be worth it to have some paper copies of his trip report in his Denvention fanzine lounge. That may satisfy some people who may not be willing to download for dollars, but who may still want to support a fan fund.

If the Aurora Control Board that Taral hints at actually exists, I guess I never sent my resume in. I was amazed, too, to find that



with one nominee in the category, Dale Speirs' *Opuntia* still couldn't win the Aurora Award for Fan Achievement (Fanzine). I am not sure what to do about this, but I might start a zine of my own. Given the result that Dale had to suffer through, who knows what might happen? No Award again?

I have yet to see Resnick or Silverberg in Toronto, and while I think Silverberg was in Toronto, possibly around Torcon 2, neither have been invited to our local SF litcon, and that's a shame. Resnick is a guest at Astronomicon in Rochester in November 2009, so I will definitely be going.

Your Corflu Silver report...yup, we came back from Red Rock early. For parts of that pathway we took, you needed hard shoes and harder feet. Yvonne went back early, and I carried on a ways, but returned with the first load. The Seattleites were made of sterner stuff, and came back later, having completed the whole route. Besides, our room looked a lot better than some of Red Rock, anyway. I've already commented on the convention, but we had a great time there, got to participate in things like the play, and I brought home a prodigious stack of fanzines. I doubt very much I'll be able to get to Seattle next year; we have commitments for Montréal (Anticipation) and Florida (International Space Development Conference).

The local has some commentary on the Japanese Worldcon...it must have been a pretty good show if people are still talking about it, and as I write, it is the Saturday of the Denver Worldcon. Let's hope we're still talking Denver when Montréal rolls around. I hope there will be more conventions in the future that will tell all about folks like Bob Tucker.

My loc...the condolence book for Arthur C. Clarke is still making the rounds at space conferences past the Washington ISDC. I have taken on a second part-time job...I am now in training to be the next membership and publications clerk for the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. The learning curve is mighty steep on this one...

Hi, Sierra! Chicken! (I'll bet she's tired of that now. Probably not nearly as funny as it used to be.)

Tim Marion has the right idea. I read that for so many years, the local was the heart of a fanzine. I recognized that I might not be able to afford much, and I am not an artist, but I felt that I could at least write letters of comment, and I have been there for 25 years and more. I've written some articles and even drawn some cartoons, but I think I'll always be in the local.

As I conclude this letter, I think the Hugos are just starting in Denver, and my fingers are crossed for you and Diana. It'd be nice to have his'n hers rockets. You won't see this until you get back, and we'll know by then.

Hope you enjoyed your trip, and it's now officially time to get things ready for Montréal. We'll see you there, and sooner with the next issue.

### **Joy V. Smith**

Interesting cover. It reminds me of a recent LiveJournal post about writers who write SF and mysteries.

I think it's a practical idea that you post items of interest to your blog and add them to *File 770*. I often recycle news, reviews into different letters, blogs, etc.

What a fun thing being a Mars rock must have been! What a great experience for Sierra!! I know some kids who told us once that we took our dogs more places -- parks for walks, etc. -- than their father took them. He is a good father, btw. You are fantastic!

Thanks for all the news items, and congratulations to Rose-Marie Lillian for her recognition and award and promotion as an outstanding teacher! Taral Wayne's report on the state of Canadian fandom was surprising. And elsewhere fans are fighting over fandom categories? The Hugo and rocket background was interesting also; and I'm happy that Diana's Hugo nomination got her some good publicity. (Marketing is hard!)

Mike, your article on Robert Silverberg and Mike Resnick as toastmasters was excellent! I truly enjoyed all that background and photos. In John Hertz' article, "Again in 2010," I loved his quote, "the fannish tradition which understands carpe diem as find fault every day." I liked the article about John the Eunuch (historical mystery) series too, but "Ten Rules for Building an AI That Won't Kill You" by Jonas was outstanding. (I love to see good articles reprinted so more people can enjoy them.)

The Corflu report and shooting article (full of interesting information) were enjoyable also, plus the Fanivore letters. I learn so much in *File 770*.

### **Mark Leeper**

I wanted to write a letter of comment on Joe Major's letter of comment on my article. Yes, George MacDonald Fraser and I have very similar opinions of the value of historic films in stoking people's interest in history. It is an opinion I have had since I was a kid. And I am willing to give films a little leeway because of it. If you like Fraser's *The Hollywood History of the World* you should also read *Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies* edited by Mark C. Carnes. Historians compare films about history with the actual history. It covers not as many films as the

Fraser, but it covers in more detail. I think the contributors are all members of the Society of American Historians. Also I have *History Goes to the Movies* by Joseph Roquemore. It is the least formal of the three and covers relatively few films.

I keep all three books for reference right next to the television where it is easy to forget they are until weeks after a covered film is shown.

### **Mike Resnick**

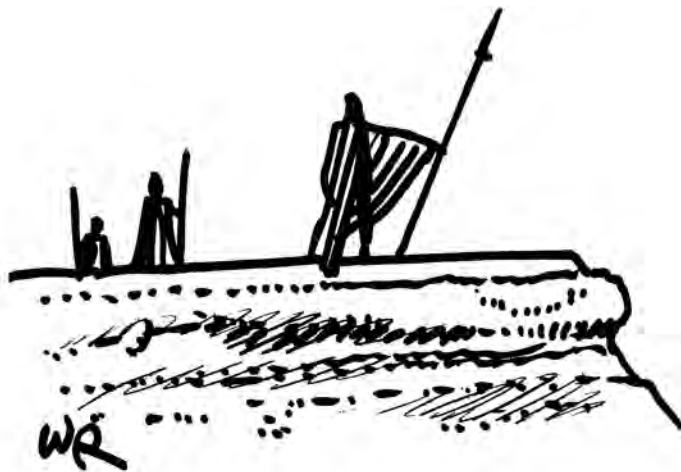
Just got my *File 770: 153* -- and what a pleasant surprise! You really did your research, and of course I'm thrilled to be ranked with Bob Silverberg among your favorite speakers.

Back when I was starting to attend, I thought the best Toastmaster/speaker in the field was Bob Bloch, followed by Isaac Asimov. To even be considered in the same category as those two, and as Bob and the (*shudder!*) Female Person From Colorado, is an enormous honor.

### **Robert Silverberg**

Thank you for that lovely piece in the new issue about my worldcon toastmastering, and Mike Resnick's. It brought back to life for me a number of episodes from the past that had begun to lose some of their vividness in my memory. And I particularly appreciated your recognition of Mike's skills. I don't think my own contributions to worldcon history have gone unrecognized over the years, but Mike has done some superb work of his own, and his abilities on stage have not been as widely noted as they deserve. Your Astaire/Kelly analogy seemed particularly apt and I was much amused by it.

I certainly wouldn't want to be toastmaster every year, as you roguishly suggest -- it's a strenuous job, and I'm quite content with my pretty-much-annual cameo appearance as a Hugo presenter. But, despite what you say here, I suspect I would consider taking it on one more time if anyone ever asked. It's been a long while since I last did it, and despite the challenges of the job I suspect I still have enough routines left to handle it again. Not that I yearn for it, you understand: the generations do move on, and just as Bob Bloch and Isaac Asimov and Bob Tucker eventually gave way at the podium to whippersnappers like Harlan and me, I've been quite content to watch young folk like Connie Willis and Tad Williams take up the task I once performed. But I wouldn't say no to it if it came my way again.



## Mike Rogers

Time always seems to be in short supply these days. Otherwise I would have written earlier. But I do want to throw you a couple of comments about the last couple of issues of File 770.

We fanzine fans are all aware of how few zines make it to thirty years. You have done it while living a reasonably normal life. That alone deserves major congratulations.

The round ball building behind Bill Higgins in #152 reminds me of a missed opportunity. You may have heard of a house in the Southeast Tennessee area that went up for sale within the last year. It looks like a 50's flying saucer and sits on the main road that climbs up to the suburb of Signal Mountain. It sold for less than I paid for my current digs. Had I only known, I could have lived in a fan's dream house. On the other hand, I wanted a one-story layout and the Space House is anything but. Besides that, it gets a certain number of tourists. Who wants that hassle?

We will not see driverless cars for at least another twenty years, by which time I may or may not still be menacing the roads. But long before that — maybe within ten years — we will see cars with speed governors that respond to governmental transmissions from antennas beside the road. The sheepification of the Western world will continue.

All this talk of the Melbourne Worldcon in 2010 makes me want to go very badly. Especially Melbourne, home of my favorite non-American sport, Australian rules football. It looks doubtful, though. If the con is held in August as most recent conventions have been, there is no way I can get away from a job at a community college during that month.

As one who grew up watching the filmed *Superman*, I especially enjoyed Taral's piece about life at The Daily Planet. I wonder if

Superman would find a way to off Taral's character rather than let him go somewhere else. After all, he knows too much. Maybe a parallel universe would be a good exile location.

*Red Dawn* may seem ludicrous to a non-American's eyes, but the events in Gruzia (or as we call it, Georgia) prove that the current Russians may be just as dangerous as the Communists ever were. I

wonder if the author knew that the name Wolverines would have come from the old high school's athletic teams.

BTW, you published my work E-mail address in the last issue. While that will not get me fired automatically, I would appreciate it if you would let people know that my preferred E-mail address is the personal address: mleerog@bellsouth.net. You'd think that AT&T would get around to changing the domain name one of these days.

Here is another news item that you might want to note: I have taken on the job of re-editing the Southern Fandom Confederation Handbook. This will be the third edition that I know of. If my memory is correct, Meade Frierson did most of the work for the original version in 1977. Toni Weisskopf edited the original in 1997. Most of the current content will survive, but I am looking for people to help bring the contents up to date. Anyone who has knowledge of specific parts of Southern U.S. fandom from 1997 to the present could help the project by writing articles or serving as sources. Anyone who wants to help should contact me at my E-mail address.

## Robert Lichtman

A few somewhat belated comments on *File 770* No. 153, starting with an appreciation for Bill Warren's mixed review of the life of Walt Daugherty—who will probably be remembered in the long run for his more or less passive role in providing Charles Burbee with the fodder to create the concept of the "Daugherty project." Bill provides a good clue as to the part of Walt's nature that led to this: "Walt went through life picking up one enthusiasm after another, becoming proficient enough to win awards, then largely dropping it and moving on to another."

Bill also notes that Walt found him a job at the L.A. Photography Center at Forry's behest, but then also got him fired. This re-

minded me in part of something the late T. Bruce Yerke wrote in one of his privately published memoirs, about how Walt got him a job at one of the L.A. area "defense" plants.

I appreciated Bill's mention of *Ah! Sweet Laney!*, the collection of Towner's writings other than *Ah! Sweet Idiocy!*, that I edited and Pat Virzi published year before last. It should be noted that copies of this well-produced volume continue to be available for \$15 each plus postage. Details are at <http://efanzines.com/ASL/index.htm>.

In your Corflu Silver report, it's *Belle*, not Beryl, Churchill.

In "The Fanivore" Alexis Gilliland announces his impending art Website (some of it is now up), this time without mentioning again that he cut up hundreds of fanzines in order to more easily scan his cartoons. I understand from some exchanges on the Southern Fandom Classic Yahooogroup, of which his wife Lee is a member, that he was quite incensed at my comments in this issue's letter column and has responded (or intends to) in a letter to you. On that list it was established that as the owner of those fanzines Alexis has every right to do with them as he wishes, while at the same time many of us deplored that he would destroy the fanzines in order to save time on his project.

Eric Mayer writes, "I believe I put out the first issue of *Groggy* in June of 1978, although my memory isn't very reliable." It's better than he thought, for indeed the first issue did come out in that very month — and it was called *Charm*, the name changing to *Groggy* with the second issue a month later.

Greg Benford mentions the possibility of an eventual worldcon held in China. I can sort of see this, but after the bad experiences of various individuals and groups dealing with random repression during the recent Olympics I for one would be reluctant to go there even if the air was clean.

I agree with Martin Morse Wooster's observation that since "John Scalzi's ultimate purpose in writing his blog is to get people to buy his books" that "his work shouldn't qualify him to be on the Best Fan Writer ballot." Unfortunately the damage has been done, caused a great hoopla in many quarters (including this one, meaning me), and we have only "assurances" from his editor (but not his publisher) that this Hugo won't be used to flog his books.

## Sheryl Birkhead

It is always a pleasure to see Taral's artwork — and thish is a goldmine. Thanks to both you and him.

My sincerest condolences and ghood thought to Terry Jeeves on the passing of

Val. A sad moment.

Hmmm – I think that my first Worldcon was an L.A.Con but I am not sure which one. If memory serves me aright, that's when I first met Rose Hogue (with whom I had corresponded – N3F), Joe Siclari and if I am correct, George Wells. I'd have to go and drag out my Worldcon stuff to see if I made any other notes...or even if that much is correct.

*Building an AI* reminds me of the mindset related to B horror movies, such as don't open that door (etc.) All pretty obvious, but oh such much fun when spelled out.

*The Sporting Day*: Well, at least this was not the typical cruise honeymoon. Congrats!

### Robert Sabella

Thanks for *File 770 #152*, another good issue with lots of news and articles.

I congratulate Frank Wu on withdrawing his name from the Best Fan Artist Hugo award. I have long been a supporter of "term limits" on Hugo Awards, both the fan and professional categories. I do not believe the Hugo Awards were ever intended to reinforce the fact that one writer-editor-artist-fanzine-semi-prozine is the most popular/best in the field year after year, decade after decade, but to "share the wealth" among all the best sf and fandom have to offer. If only all contenders were as magnanimous as the fan artists have been.

I enjoyed Taral Wayne's very clever article on the original tv Superman. As a comic book fan in my youth, I found the show a bit cheesy, but I still watched it faithfully and remember many aspects of it. Particularly the line "No comment until the time period is over." I wonder how many other fans of the show remember that episode?

Mark Leeper's article on "dubious accuracy" in historical movies was also fascinating. I am a big fan of historical fiction, and periodically something I read will make me jump up and go check some historical facts. While I can let an occasional anomaly pass by, I tend to be somewhat of a stickler in most regards and will reject a book or a movie for taking too many liberties with the facts. But considering what directors/producers do to sf books, why should we expect them to show any more respect to historical facts?

### Alexis Gilliland

Thank you for the 30<sup>th</sup> Annish of *File 770*, to which I am now somewhat belatedly responding. No surprise that, I've been busy with the website, but progress is slowly being made.

For instance, the cross index of fanzines is now completed, showing 271 titles from *Afan* to *Zosma* (including *File 770* with 44 cartoons. Over 30 years that's not too many, right?) about 3,500 cartoons in all. Using Photoshop Lee cleaned up a lot of cartoons, which I then separated, oriented and renamed, as for instance, hstFile770-914c.tif, where the hst means that it was the 3<sup>rd</sup> of however many were on that scanned page. So far, I have 589 cartoons in the history section, with maybe two or three hundred from *The WSFA Journal* still to go. Sigh. To which add 700 cartoons from my three collections, 800 collaborations with Rotsler, and a whole lot of originals that were never published.

Robert Lichtman is confused when he says: "The most shocking piece of the whole Gilliland/WSFA flap" is that I should have cut my cartoons out of my fanzines. Hey, I didn't start to work on the website until after my radiation treatment for prostate cancer had been completed, long, long after the WSFA flap took place, and clearly separate from it. Lichtman is also shocked and appalled that I should have abused my fanzines so, "displaying a hugely misplaced sense of fannish propriety in the service of [my] ego." Tsk tsk. The short answer is: My fanzines, my cartoons, my choice. A longer answer would be than an organized collection, such as that of Bruce Pelz (800,000 items) or Harry Warner, Jr. (100,000 items) is very different from a hoard of dead paper (2-3000 items), which is what I had. What I had was eight boxes in the basement, fanzines from before 1974, when we moved here, and 32 boxes of post-1974 fanzines in the attic, none of which were sorted, organized, or filed in any way shape or form. So I cut the cartoons out, listing date and place of publication, assembled them on sheets of paper, and finally scanned them in, to save them on carefully labeled CDs. Creating order out of chaos, or reversing entropy, is hard, tedious work, but if Lichtman thinks that *that* is my misplaced sense of fannish propriety, I might agree with him. However, his own sense of fannish propriety seems to have shifted its emphasis from fans to fanzines some time ago.

[*Issue 153*:] Taral's cover and back cover are fuzzy noir, and funny. The obituary of Paul Parsons was news, and noted with regret. Your own article on Resnick and Silverberg was outstanding and funny, possibly because you quote both of them in context. It's probably the best piece in the issue.

### We Also Heard From

**Sheryl Birkhead**: Out of curiosity, how heavy is/was the chocolate covered manhole cover...and chocaholic (sp?) that I am, how thick a chocolate layer is involved?

[[*It's been a long time, but I don't recall it being all that heavy – less than a couple pounds. The chocolate covering was probably about a quarter inch thick.*]]

**Henry L. Welch**: I have seen more con reports for Corflu Silver than I can ever remember for any convention in my 20+ years in fanzine fandom. Was there something strange in the water of Las Vegas?

[[*Apparently so. Lots of people were purifying theirs with twelve percent grain alcohol imported from Tennessee.*]]

**Erwin S. "Filthy Pierre" Strauss**: You worried about your news items being out of date, due to the Internet. But as someone who only occasionally goes on the Net, I look forward to an hour or so with *File 770* to be sure I haven't missed any important fannish news. Keep up the good work.

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