

Time and Again

#5

August 2008



**Guilty Pleasures and Hidden Treasures and
all that sort of rot**

Lee Anne Lavell

Ed Cox Doodle Where?

Dave Locke (reprint)

Fitted for Fanzines

Eric Mayer

**How We Got Lost on the Way Home From
LASFS!**

June Moffatt

...Another Fan's Poison: The A-V Geeks

Curt Phillips

The Unbearable Darkness Of Filming

Dave Rowe

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...Another Fan's Poison: The A-V Geeks column, by Curt Phillips

More Mud In Your Eye: The Unbearable Darkness Of Filming by Dave Rowe

Much Nothings About Ado: Guilty Pleasures & Hidden Treasures & all that sort of rot column, by Lee Anne Lavell

Ed Cox Doodle Where? reprint, by Dave Locke

Notes From Byzantium: Fitted for Fanzines column, by Eric Mayer

How We Got Lost on the Way Home From LASFS! by June Moffatt

Pure Quill Pixelated Lettercolumn by y'all

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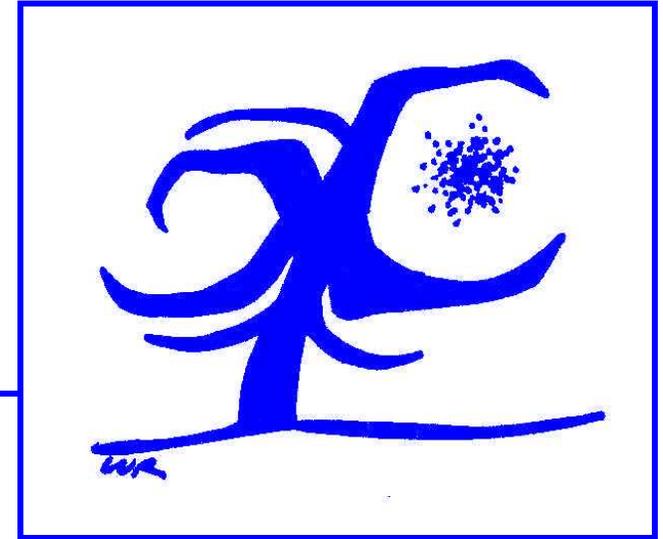
07, 09 photos from Curt Phillips

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Diabologic

Editorial by Dave Locke



Popcorn Dialog

Selected scenes from movies which were never made, and for good reason.

Scene from *King of the Mad Scientists* Columbia, 1956

"Do you think this means there are some things that Man was not meant to know?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because look at all the trouble I got into with this universal solvent."

Scene from *Spread Eagle* Tomahawk Productions, 1994

"How you get that name, Spread Eagle?" asked Pukes

Milk, running the tip of her finger across his bare chest.

Smoke from the small fire that warmed them traveled up through the opening at the top of the teepee.

"Ugh, much trouble with white eyes in blue uniforms in grey city. Spent much time hugging black and white iron horse with flickering red light on top."

"Me from tribe with different customs," Pukes Milk said. "We name baby for most common trait observed. Like me and my sisters, Foul Diapers and Gerber Breath, and my brothers Drooling Chin and Tooting Breechcloth."

Spread Eagle nodded, adding a couple of sticks to the fire, and watched a few sparks drift up with the smoke.

"Us, too," he said.

"My horse's tail you did, Big Brave," she scoffed. "How old were you when you got name?"

"Oh. Sixteen summers."

"That's more like it. But, you no have name before six-

teen summers?"

"Oh, sure, we have different names for the first 15 summers."

"A name change," mused Pukes Milk. "What were you called to begin with?"

"Sticky Fingers."

**Scene from *Gumbalaya On The Bayou*
*Intrepid Promulgations, 1992***

"I see the dead coming to get even, me."

"Say what?"

"Me."

"You?"

"No, spirit of dead."

"Them?"

"We. We be, he be, she be, come to get even I say, me."

"You?"

"No, spirit of dead. Rise and walk again I say, me."

"Does their health insurance cover speech therapy?"

**Scene from: *The Fastest Gun In Outer Space*
*Intrepid Productions, 1983***

"Sooner or later, Ringo, you're going to meet up with something who's just a little bit faster. Why don't you hang up your blasters and settle down with me? We can start a little ranch and raise Bandersnatch."

"No, Sara Jean Bob, the rancher's life isn't for me. I need the thrill of that old Trampas Walk, wondering if this time maybe that alien with fourteen gunbelts will be the one to do me in."

"Okay, to hell with it. I never liked Bandersnatch much,

anyway."

Scene from *Curse Of The Atomic Piles, 1960*

"There they are, Captain! Hundreds of zombies, stumbling, shambling, groping their way along! Their frozen faces are all alike! It's incredible, Captain! How shall we deploy the men?"

"Cool it, Wilstach. The zombies are three blocks from here. We're passing through skid row."

Scene from *Tokyo Rose, From The Ashes, 1967*

"Fumio, look! Rodan and Godzilla are across the street and dropkicking the Hilton Hotel!"

"Shit, Yamasaki, I told everyone last time that we should have rebuilt Tokyo in New Zealand."

First Contact Story, from an unpublished fanzine

Take me to your leader.

You mean hostess? She passed out an hour ago. Those are her heels showing from behind the chair over there.

I must determine Earth's suitability for entry to the Galactic Federation.

Heavy. Here, you want a hit? Take a beer, anyway.

Do you consider yourselves a warlike people?

Only when we're bidding for conventions. Can I try on your chicken suit?

Do you look upon yourselves with excessive pride in comparison to other living things?

Nah. Only Charlie over there really believes he's a Slan. Charlie's the one with the helicopter beanie and the Jes-

sica Salmonson teeshirt.

What would you do with permission to engage in interstellar travel?

Are you kidding? Who could afford to travel to Procyon just for a three-day con? It would never work. Besides, the mail service is bad enough without having to wait five years or so to get a hot deadtree fanzine from the other side of the galaxy. Forget it.

If This Had Gone On, from an unpublished news item

Off in some alternate universe people of all colors -- perhaps even green -- are cheering the triumphant return splashdown of a manned expedition to Mars. If the U.S. had followed its original timetable, astronauts would have made the first landing on Mars and now, in August of a long-ago year, their Apollo spacecraft would be bobbing in ocean waters and awaiting pickup. Not this August, not in this universe.

A trans-temporal reporter has been dispatched to the appropriate alternate universe for an on-the-spot interview with the mission's Commander as the astronauts await pickup.

Reporter: What did you find on Mars?

Astronaut: Percival Lowell was right. There *are* canals on Mars.

R: How can that be? He was seeing the lines in his own defective eyeballs.

A. A popular misconception. If it were true, he'd have seen canals on everything he looked at. Besides, it was the famous Italian astronomer, Schiaparelli, who discovered and named the canals "canali", which in his language meant channels. Two equally famous American scientists

corroborated his findings; one was Lowell and the other was Edward Emerson Barnard.

R: But the unmanned flights recorded no canals.

A: Of course not. Just like here on Earth, most of the canals have been paved over for freeways and tollways.

R: Freeways, on Mars?

A: That's right. What else could they do when most of the water dried up? That's a lot of empty ditches to have lying around for people to fall into. Of course, they still keep a few around for chicken races and toboggan runs and things like that.

R: How do they live without water? What do they drink?

A: Nothing with a water chaser. Day-to-day they drink Pepsi.

R: Martians drink Pepsi Cola?

A: Yes, but it mixes terrible with Tang. We tried it once. No water to mix it with, you know.

R: What are the Martians like?

A: Well, they're an odd lot.

R: Could you elaborate on that, please?

A: Sure. All their real estate ads are for "beachfront property", for instance, and they like to wear Foster-Grants and ride around in dune buggies. The big event on Saturday night is team sandcastle races; the first one done is the team that can spit the most.

R: What do Martians look like?

A: Not much. They're all little green people with big cheeks. Sexually, you can't tell the men from the women, except that the women have their own apa.

R: None of this makes any sense.

A: Well, you take your chances, Jack, when you're in an alternate universe. Excuse us, will you? Here's our ship.

BACKTALKING THE BOOK

BACKTALKING THE BOOK: from *And Chaos Died* by Joanna Russ, Ace 1970, pg. 102

"She twisted his little fingers, sat on his head, screamed as he slapped her, ran away on glass feet in which he could see the frightened convulsing of her organs."

Backtalking The Book: UPI OHIO - Playful alien with organs in glass feet astonishes delivery boy in Cincinnati.

BACKTALKING THE BOOK: from *Space Relations* by Donald Barr, Fawcett '75, pg. 138

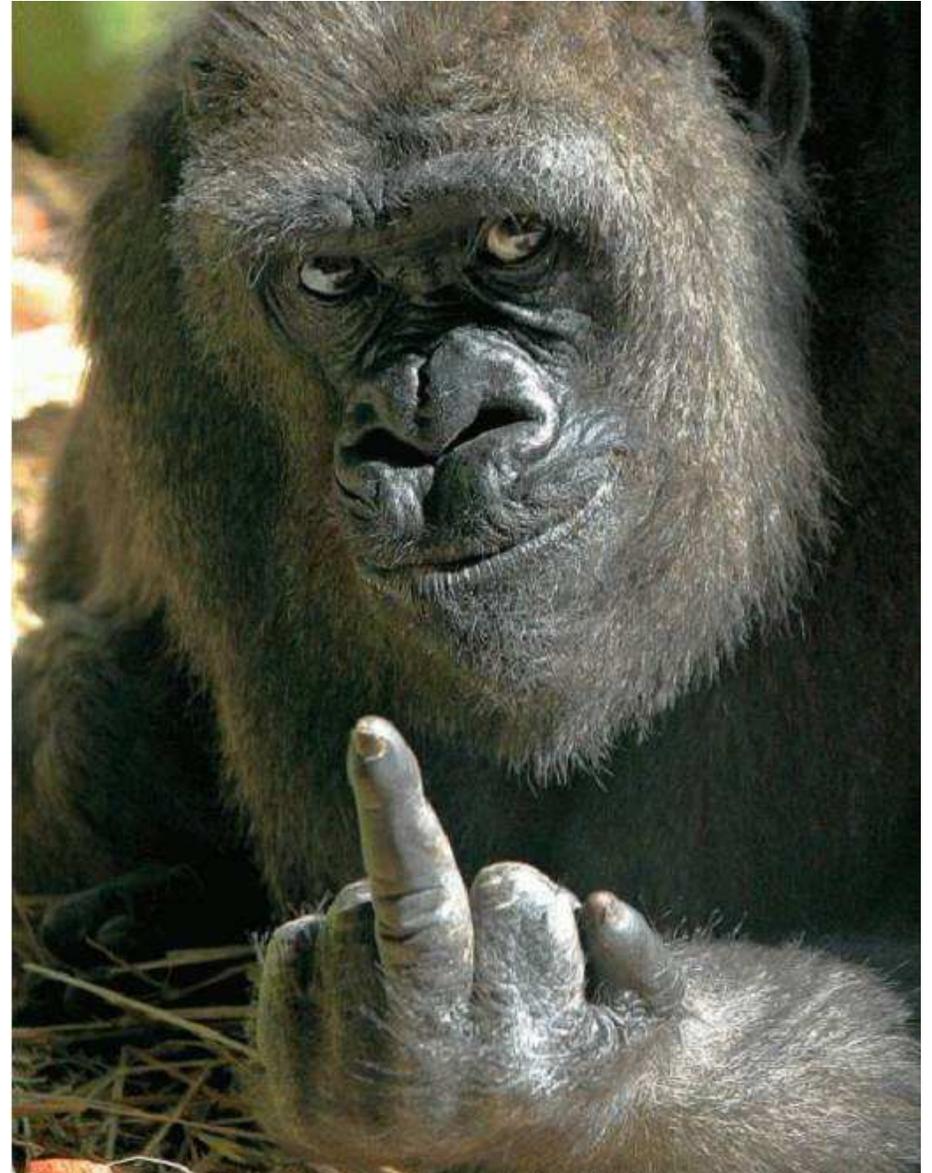
"Then he opened his fly, filled his lungs, and swam downward."

Backtalking The Book: Shortly after coming back up he was arrested for exhaling in public.

BACKTALKING THE BOOK: from *And Chaos Died* by Joanna Russ, Ace 1970, page 37

"The sun's reflection burned stilly on the lake, the shale sweated, the houses stood and made shadows, and then in a blast of light, in a shrill whistle as the fabric of creation ripped from sky to rock, the universe bent in on itself and produced a naked twelve-year-old boy."

Backtalking The Book: Spectators and reporters at the scene were in general agreement that it seemed hardly worth the effort.



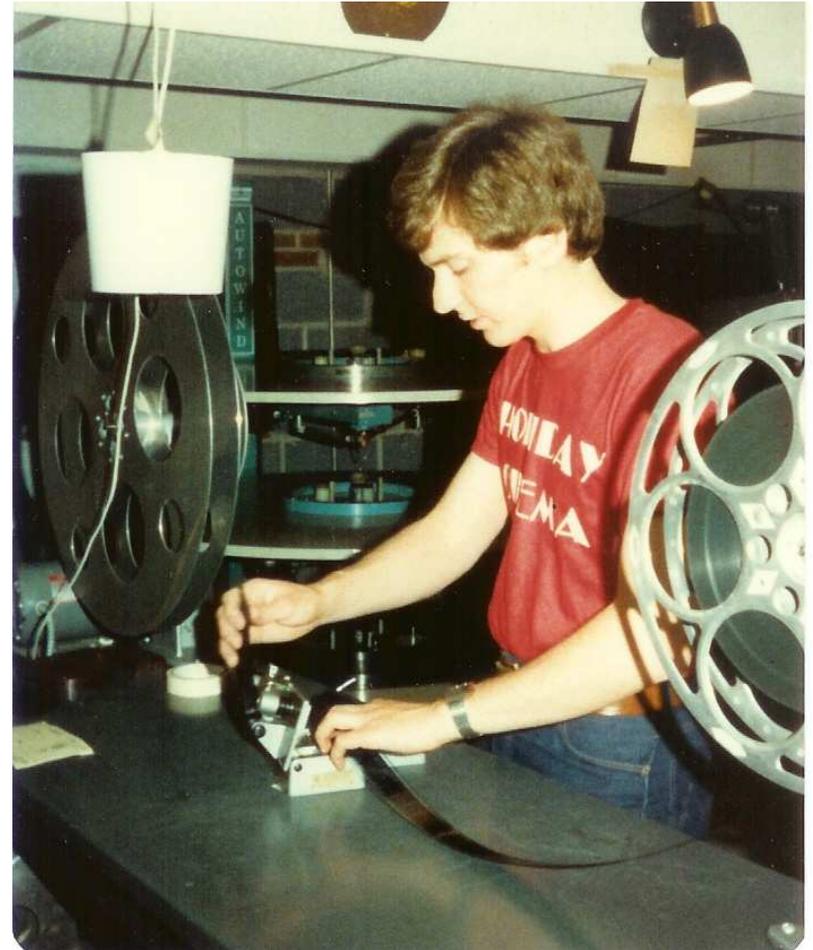
...ANOTHER FAN'S POISON

The a-v geeks

by Curt Phillips

Do Worldcons still show movies? I mean, actual film-in-the-projector movies? I don't know since I've not attended a Worldcon in many years, but I know that they used to. I even used to help do it...

Not long ago on PulpMags - the pulp magazine discussion group on Yahoo!Groups - my old friend Eric Jamborsky wrote about the now almost vanished hobby of collecting movies on 8mm, 16mm or original 35mm prints. In doing so he inadvertently launched me on another of my jaunts into the past because, back in the years before movies on home video were available, I used to collect films that way too. Way back in elementary school I became one of those kids who learned how to run the school's 16mm projector that we used to show an occasional "educational film" such as *Your Toothbrush Is Your Friend*, *Virginia's Industrial Coal Heritage*, or that Cold War classic, *Duck And Cover*. I and the two other guys in my school would actually compete to see who'd get to run the projector on any particular occasion. It was years later when I realized that most of my classmates couldn't have cared less about who got to run the projector and considered those of us who did to be geeks. And so we were the "A-V Geeks". Had



we stopped to think about it at the time I imagine we geeks would have worn the label with considerable pride. And then too, our school would also have "Movie Days" about twice a year when some feature film would be

rented on 16mm - there were a handful of companies that specialized in renting such films and their catalogs were little wonders of cinema history that I would pour over until I had them all but memorized - and it would be shown in the school auditorium. I think the students paid a quarter or so for admission which I suppose paid for the rental of the film. I remember showing *Johnny Tremain* one year, mostly because the scene where Johnny burns his hand in molten lead is seared forever in my memory (sorry...).

That continued into high school where I became known as one of the few people around who could fix film projectors or repair damaged film. By that time I'd bought my own very used 16mm projector at a junk shop and torn it down to learn how it all worked. When I was a high school senior I quit my part time job at Pizza Hut and got a job at a local movie theater, the long-gone Holiday Cinema in Bristol, Tennessee. They had advertised for someone to work the concession stand but I told the manager, "I'd rather work as a projectionist". Talked myself into that job and soon learned 35mm projection. That theater happened to host, once a month, a Saturday morning Western Film Festival that attracted about 60 or 70 older men, many of whom brought cans of film which turned out to be 16mm prints of B-westerns. Getting to know some of these fellows I learned that there was a small subculture of movie collectors and I soon bought a 16mm print of *Night Of The Living Dead* from one of them. I found it to be a lot more interesting than B-westerns. I think I paid \$90 for that film which was a little high even then. Later I bought a print of *King Kong* for \$300 (that price still scares me more than the movie does today...) and my favorite, *The Day The Earth Stood Still* for \$125, plus a few short

subjects like a Superman cartoon from WWII, some old Army cartoons, and so forth. I even remember going to the local TV station and talking to the station manager to ask if he had any old 16mm films of *Star Trek* I might buy. He patiently explained to me how the system of local television and 16 mm films worked but he did give me a few 16mm NASA films that he'd been about to throw away. And that meeting led to an actual job offer at that station just a year later, but that's another story.

I showed these films at family gatherings and to friends who'd come over and visit. It was never very hard to get me to arrange a showing. I once held a "movie night" out in the backyard of my parents' home that attracted about 30 friends and neighbors, and a nice little party (no admission charge...) with dad firing up the grill and mom making about 20 gallons of potato salad. There was another evening when I hauled all my equipment over to my Grandfather's house and ran *King Kong* for my Grandparents and a few cousins. My Grandfather - a life-long farmer who rarely ventured far afield - had never seen *King Kong* before and sat there in his favorite easy chair and watched it intently. He beamed as the film ended and I turned the room lights back on. "Well, that was really something!" he allowed with more enthusiasm than any of us usually saw from him. He mentioned that film to me now and then for the next several years.

I started showing those films at local SF conventions, often trading their use for a free membership. This was just before home video tapes became all the rage and so in those days if you wanted to see *The Day The Earth Stood Still* you either had to get very lucky and catch a showing on late-night TV, or go to a film or SF convention. Film rooms used to be standard fair at SF conventions in those

days, and were a major part of programming. On the day that the 1986 Worldcon started in Atlanta, I got a call from Rick Albertson - an old friend from the apa *MYRIAD*. Rick was running the Technical Crew at the convention and at the very last minute the professional movie projectionist he'd hired to run the 35mm projectors for the convention had backed out of the job. If I could possibly jump in my car and come to Atlanta, Rick proposed; he'd have a Tech Crew pass for the con and his eternal gratitude waiting for me. That sounded to me as if it would translate into a good bit of fun and major egoboo to boot, so off to Atlanta I went. As it turned out, another fan projectionist did turn up in the audience but he and I took shifts and ran the many films and cartoons that the convention had obtained to a large room packed with SF film fans all weekend. And as it turned out, I was the only one on hand who was able to trou-

bleshoot the convention's cranky old 16mm projector when it began eating film during a showing of the wonderful old British fantasy film from 1946, *A Matter Of Life And Death* (a great underrated movie which stars David Niven, Kim Hunter, and Raymond Massey that sometimes turns up on Turner Classic Movies. I recommend it highly). The



audience patiently waited while I cleared the film gate and dirt trap, and rethreaded the film around the cumbersome sprockets leaving just enough of a loop above and below the trap. Then as I lowered the lights and restarted the projector, the gorgeous Technicolor image of Kim Hunter flashed upon the screen and I was rewarded with the thunderous applause of the audience. For a projectionist, that's sweet egoboo indeed!

I suppose I prefer the way things are today, where I have two old movie channels on cable TV available to me and about 100 old SF films on DVD on a shelf next to the TV, but there is something kind of magical that we've lost in giving up those relaxed Saturday afternoons at a SF convention sitting in a darkened room with the clackety-clack of a 16mm projector forming the background noise for a few hundred other SF fans, most of whom are watching *The Day The Earth Stood Still* for the first time. You younger whippersnappers who've grown up with home video and DVD's might not believe me, but in a way those

days seem better to me somehow.

By that time I had a considerable amount of money tied up in those few 16mm films and home video was just starting to appear to be the Wave of the Future, so I decided to try to sell them off. I got very lucky and sold the whole lot - projector and all - to another fan who was doing the same trick of paying his way to conventions with film shows. And soon thereafter I bought my first VCR. And the rest of the story you can all guess. In a little while I think I'll go into my den and drop my DVD of *The Day The Earth Stood Still* into the machine and watch it again for the umpteenth time. I'll never get tired of watching Patricia Neil practically soil her knickers while she tries to remember what it was she was supposed to say to Gort. But I know that as I watch it, there'll be a small voice in my mind telling me that there's something missing: the "clackety-clack" of a 16mm movie projector...



MORE MUD IN YOUR EYE

THE UNBEARABLE DARKNESS OF FILMING

by Dave Rowe



Most of this tale comes from second- and third-party gossip and is coming to you through the Internet so please treat it with an adequate level of disbelief...

The names of the director and producer will not be revealed as by the time the movie in question appears they may have been changed, inter-changed or totally replaced and anyway it's best not to leave oneself open to being sued. You know what Hollywood-types are like, even if you've never met them...

And here's where the story really starts...

Back in September last year Bill invited the film co-op members to a super-secret Saturday meeting from which nothing was to be divulged until after the deed was done.

The deed was to help make a movie for the Sci-Fi Channel.

Its plot was simple: A mineful of lithium (which for the purposes of the movie combusts when mixed with water) gets flooded and the miners and rescue team have to escape the conflagration.

The producer and director had thought of shooting on location in Montana but Bill had scouted out local locations and calculated a cost-analysis that demonstrated Indiana was the better bet.

Getting a film unit up and running in Indiana is something very dear to Bill's heart. What wasn't helping was that a Governor paid some myopic moron to write a report on the liability of using the State for the movie industry. The report presented declared a resounding 'NO!' Why? Because Indiana doesn't already have a movie unit (duh?) and there were little or no interesting locations. The report cost \$350,000. It is to hoped that the report's writer will be savaged to death by his seeing-eye dog.

Bill, who has been a cameraman, extra and goodness knows what else in the movies, runs a food distribution service, started the film co-op and was executive producer of the movie. He warned us that although we'd all met the director at the B-Movie Celebration (reference T&A #3 for a report on that), where he was an all-round-one-of-the-boys-nice-guy, when this guy was directing he was a plug-ugly anthropophagite.

We all smiled and nodded sagely, not knowing what we were letting ourselves in for.

The director now makes up to five small movies a year, thanks to ruining his legitimate career by making some soft-porn movies and putting his own name on them. From there on he was only allowed to make the cheapest

productions and even then he has to use a pseudonym.

When the secret meeting was in session Bill asked for volunteers (they would be paid, work up to 7 days, 12 hours each day, two full meals, on-location catering plus board). Don immediately put his hand up. Don, it seems, has helped in one capacity or another with every amateur/semi-pro movie made in Indiana. He mentioned a couple of jobs but added what he really wanted to do was acting. Bill said that although he realized that was what Don wanted he desperately needed Don expertise in the crew-area and deftly steered Don away from his thespian aspirations because Don does not possess the presence nor the voice of an actor.

By the time November was coming to a close Bill was getting more and more anxious and more and more angry. He'd given Don the job of sorting the props and they had not been sorted. Bill's warehouse floor was littered with them (including a total burnt female body with the breasts still erect. She must have been wearing an asbestos bra). Don had been chewed out.

Next day Carolyn went to Sam's Club to collect the provisions. The volume accumulated to three times what her Matrix could hold so she phoned Bill for help but he was in a meeting however he suggested contacting Don who had a 4x4. Don put the pedal to the metal and raced thirty-odd country miles to come to Carolyn's aid. He loaded two vehicles, drove to Bill's warehouse and unloaded but refused to face Bill.

Don is an ex-Marine.

Monday, December 3: The Bloomington NPR station in its local news announced that a Bel-Aire movie company was filming at Marengo Caves in Indiana. It took a couple of seconds to realize that was "our" movie.

By that time everybody had already met the director's Mr-Hyde-side. He started ordering people about with increasing volume and sarcasm but not telling them the whys and wherefores of their multitude of appointed tasks. The result was that a staff-load of first-timers were saddled with not knowing precisely what they were doing and why they were doing it.

To add to the mayhem some of the special effects were not very effective. The local sfx guy knew his onions (having worked on effects and make-up for stage and screen) but what had worked so brilliantly in Bill's warehouse was not working in a damp cave at 54 degrees Fahrenheit (12 C) and a trail of smoke failed to appear at the appointed moment.

The director did his top. The sfx guy tried to explain. His explanations were just like pouring gasoline on the fire of the director's temper.

The sfx guy stayed in the cave to perfect the effect when everybody else went to lunch. When they returned they found the cave filled with smoke. Filming was further delayed. You might just be able to imagine what the director had to say on the matter.

Meantime, Don was designated as props manager but the job proved too much for the man so he was demoted to a gopher. That was until the producer asked him for some lighting and the continuity lady added 'could you bring me a coffee, too.' For a joke Don returned with the coffee and no lights.

"I suppose we'll shoot without lights!" blistered the producer and sacked Don.

A week or so later Bill posted a note on the film Co-op's website saying all paychecks would be handed out at the Xmas party. Don, with his dreams of professional cinema

shattered, shot off a terse reply 'Send mine. I'm not coming.'

Dustin, one of the local actors, was a very handsome young man and two of the 'starlets' kept informing him of this in various ways. Unfortunately this was while his make-up was being applied. Have you ever tried getting the make-up right on an actor who is blushing?

The word is that the compliments became more than just words and last heard of Dustin was contemplating heading to Hollywood in search of fame, fortune and fornication.

A member of the cast who was heading for a career in movie acting after the shoot was a Texan named Sue. She was also acting as Kevin Sorbo's intern. One morning she drove to pick up Kevin from his room at the French Lick Casino. Nobody had told her about the shortcut. When she finally got there Kevin, being the star, delayed a little so he was late for his make-up call but not for his actual scene. While that was going on Sue was promptly fired.

Kevin came out of his trailer (he was the star so he had a trailer on site too) and asked where Sue was.

'We don't talk about personal problems on the set.' said the producer.

'Yes we do!' said the star and goes to bat for Sue.

By that time the cast had also found out what had happened and began batting on Sue's behalf too so she was reinstated. Which must have been a huge relief for her as she was transferring her whole family to N.Y. so she could pursue a career in acting and to have arrived there with a resume that read 'Sacked On Set' would not have been advisable.

Friday afternoon, December 7: The last Indiana shot was in the can. The crew headed back to central Indiana.

The cast to their scattered bases went. The upper strata retired to their rooms at the casino.

There, the producer cavalierly told the continuity lady to go home, despite the fact that check-out time had long gone so her room had to be paid for anyway. Continuity is the most precise, exacting and thankless task in the movies so she, more than anybody, had borne the brunt of the director's demented diatribes. The producer was just adding injury to insult.

Bill, as executive producer, simply stepped in and said 'No, she's staying' at which the producer and director retreated to the bar to await their dates, who were two of the 'starlets'.

The two ladies were in their rooms, freshening up, dressing up and applying make-up. They took two hours about it. By the time they got to the bar the producer had moved to the State of Paralytic.

That night there was a wrap-party in Franklin, usually a time of rejoicing and relief. Hardly anyone came.

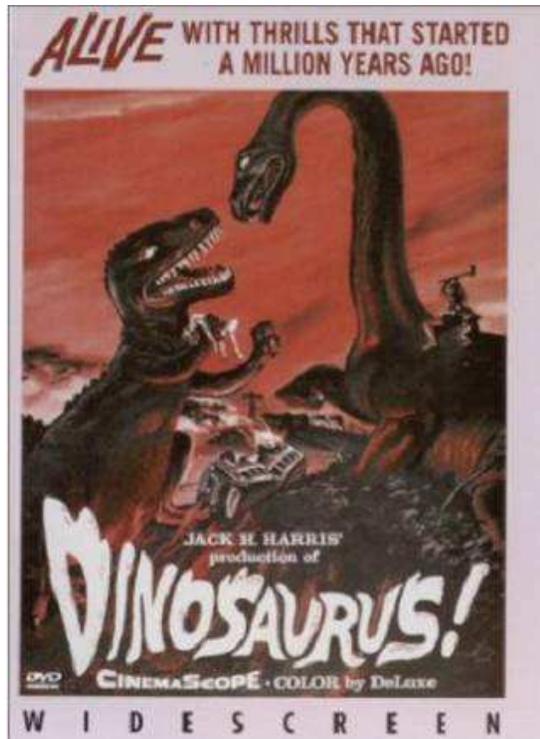
There was talk of the co-op helping the director in the Spring with a film called "*Smart Ass*" about a couple of bodacious, big breasted, blond bimbos and a talking donkey (Francis never had it so good) but the producer walked off with that assignment and no ass has been smarted around here.

At the co-op Xmas party Bill phoned the director so we could all yell 'Merry Christmas' or 'All the best' or some other less endearing salutation.

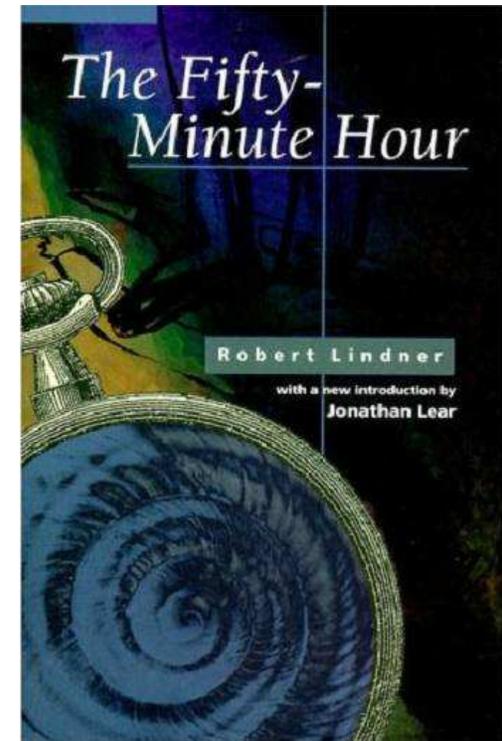
With a broad, sarcastic smile on her face the continuity lady started singing 'For He's A Jolly Good Fellow'. We all tried to join in but what resulted was a tumult of guffaws.



Much Nothings About Ado: Guilty Pleasures and Hidden Treasures and all that sort of rot *Lee Anne Lavell*



A long time ago there was a small circulation fantasy and science fiction magazine called *Fantasy Book*. The only place I could get it was a mostly used and rare books store that also carried off-brand book publications such as *Shasta*, *Gnome* and *FPCI*, the latter of which also published a magazine called *Fantasy Book*. This very small circulation magazine featured stories by emerging authors such as Cordwainer Smith. Some of these stories were by Jack Vance and in the background of what is now known as the “*Dying Earth*” series. I read them and thought “Wow!”. Some time later these stories were compiled into a book called *The Dying Earth*. It was published by a company called Hillman that mostly did things like westerns. *The Dying Earth* may have been its only SF entry.



The books were very poorly distributed and I was lucky to have even spotted a copy. I immediately discovered on buying one that they were very poorly made, so, knowing that this would be a book that I would be rereading frequently, I promptly bought a second copy. This edition, from what I can tell, has become almost legendary, with ridiculous prices being asked for mint copies. I still have

my two copies, well covered with eye tracks and certainly not mint, although I now also have more sturdily made editions from different publishers. Ah, but if I had had the foresight to carefully bag and put away a third copy... (As a side-note, the title of one of the fanzines I published, *Embelyon*, as well as the name of one of my cats, Chun (the Unavoidable), were taken from that book.)

One of my favorite authors is Fredric Brown. Two of his books which I really like are *The Mind Thing* and *The Deep End*, the former s-f and the latter a mystery, and yet these two are probably the most poorly plotted of his books. The premises are hinged on improbable coincidences, yet they move so rapidly that one soon forgets that fact and just goes along for the ride. I think of them as a literary equivalent of the *Die Hard* movies. Great fun and just forget about logic.

One of my guilty pleasures, as far as movies go, is a film called *Dinosaurus*. At first glance it appears to be one of those dinosaurs-and-cave-men-meet-modern-people-on-an-isolated-tropical-island schlock films. How many of those or something similar have you seen, anyway? So what makes this one different? Well, to start with, it features a scene that I had been waiting for years to see. There is a typical bar fight between a good guy and a bad guy. Bad guy picks up a bottle and breaks it to use as a weapon. Finally, it happened. The bottle cuts the hell out of his hand. Later on two dinosaurs, a Tyrannosaurus and a Brontosaurus (oh, well, to be technical, an Apatosaurus) plus a cave man are accidentally unfrozen and let loose on the island. The cave man runs afoul of modern conveniences such as flush toilets, plus the woman of the house, all festooned for bed in her curlers and cold cream. On the island is a small boy whose hobby is collecting free dinosaur models and learning about them. When the Bron-

tosaurus sneaks up on him in the jungle, he looks at it hopefully and says, "Remember, you're the friendly vegetarian from the cereal box." The film culminates with a fight between the Tyrannosaurus and a steam shovel. All in all, not what I had expected when I first started watching the film. For those who might be interested, the release date is 1960 and it is available on DVD at Amazon.

Occasionally there are scenes in movies that are just perfect and should never be changed, at least in my mind. I am going to write of two from the s-f genre. One is from *King Kong* (the original) and the other from *Mighty Joe Young* (also the original), so in an off-beat way, they are kind of related. The scene in *King Kong* where Faye Wray is rehearsing on the boat, before they reach the island, is one of the most terrifying things I have ever seen simply because it presents the unknown and the imagination is always more terrifying than reality. When the film was remade, and remade, that scene was never attempted again. In the original *Mighty Joe Young* I refer to the scene in the night club where Joe is first introduced. It starts with Terry Moore, sitting at a grand piano, the stage dark except for a spotlight on the platform where she is sitting. She is playing a rather childish version of "*Beautiful Dreamer*". Slowly the platform rises into the air, seemingly floating there. The orchestra joins in with the piano in a crescendo as the platform appears to hover there in the dark with nothing holding it up. The announcer says, "Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Joe Young!" Another spotlight flashes to under the platform and there is Joe, holding the platform, girl, grand piano and all,

above his head. I don't know whether the remake of the movie tried to duplicate this scene or not. I haven't seen it.

Back in 1955 a psychoanalyst by the name of Robert Lindner wrote a book called *The Fifty-Minute Hour*. (He also wrote another, the title of which may be more familiar to you called *Rebel without a Cause*.) It is a collection of five of his cases presented, of course, with appropriate screening so that the identity of his patients would not be revealed. The final case in the lot is called "*The Jet Propelled Couch*" and it deals with a patient who has the delusion that he can at will go from this earth to another planet where he is a great hero. The patient's name as given in the book is Kirk Allen. However, on reading the account I became aware of what his real name must be. First, the patient had come across his own name in one book which had jolted him, then encountered it in another which told of the hero's adventures on another world. In his delusion Kirk Allen came to believe these stories were true and that they were told about him. The 'real' Kirk Allen was a scientist and so took voluminous notes, etc. about the planet that he visited. It was the analyst's job to dissuade him of this delusion, and to do so he decided to participate in it by freely reading all these notes and discussing everything with Allen. By doing so, Allen became aware that this was a delusion and thus was cured of it. Lindner himself had delayed the cure by becoming so enthusiastically immersed in the delusion that Allen had hated to tell him that he no longer believed in it, while Lindner, himself, hated to give it up. That's the gist of

the story. However, I think I can say with relative accuracy that the true name of Kirk Allen is John Carter. Too many things fit. A name common enough to be found in two different novels. A science-fiction series in book form. How many of them were there at that time? Outside of Burroughs, I can't think of any right now. And a hero who can hop from one planet to another without a space ship? But that is not the point of this paragraph. We know his name is John Carter. We know he wrote a lot about Barsoom. What I want to know is what happened to those notes. They should make for fascinating reading. But I have heard nothing further about them. Now maybe someone in the Burroughs society might know. But I don't and I surely would like to! I only have one further thing to say about this, which is that in many ways what a shame he had to give up his delusion. I mean, if you had your choice of a humdrum job and being a great hero loved by all, which would *you* choose? And, after all is said and done, reality is purely subjective anyway.



"Why'd I even get these fucking nipple rings?"



Ed Cox Doodle Where?



by Dave Locke

written 7/75, published in Mike Shoemaker's *Oxytocic* #13, 7/76

Over the years I've received many strange requests for fan articles. Come to think of it, I've received a number of strange requests on other matters, as well, but let's not overly concern ourselves with that for the moment. Regarding solicitations for fan articles, I have only once been able to conjure up an article based on an editorially-selected topic.

I dread the receipt of letters or postcards wherein the

faneditor has suggested a topic for me to write on.

Not too long ago someone asked me to do a book review on *Left Hand of Darkness*. That someone would request a book review from me is strange enough in itself, but I found it particularly disheartening that they would pick one of the few books which I regularly used for the medicinal purpose of putting myself to sleep at night. So I had to write an apology to the faneditor in question.

"Terribly sorry I can't come through with this review. I've been reading *Left Hand of Darkness* for a couple of years now, every night just like clockwork, and have saved a good chunk of money by not having to keep my medicine cabinet stocked with sleeping pills. However, I haven't gotten past the first chapter yet. If you think you'll still be publishing in another ten or twenty years, I'll keep you in mind when I get a chance to write that review."

I thought that would take care of the subject, but the editor sent me the following reply: "I've never encountered anyone who found *Left Hand of Darkness* to be boring. This would create some good discussion in my letter-column. Could you do a review of the first chapter, or as much of it as you've read, and just generally kick around the factors that make the story so unappealing to you?"

I replied: "Gosh. I'm really sorry. I came home pretty late last night, read your letter, then went right to bed and read a couple of paragraphs more of *Left Hand of Darkness* before falling asleep (I don't think my present copy will last until I finish it, as it's beginning to fall apart from hitting the deck so many times). When I got up in the morning I tried to concentrate on my feelings toward that part of the story which I had read. Unfortunately, I couldn't remember anything about it. When I made note of this fact to my wife, who was munching toast on the other side of the table, she informed me that this revelation did not surprise her overly much, as she had noticed during the course of the last couple of weeks that I had read the same page four times. Is there some other book I could review for you?"

I never got a reply.

Another time, someone asked me to do an article on Sex and Science Fiction. I fired off an airmail postcard

back to them: "What is sex?"

I never heard from them either. Six months later I fired off another airmail postcard: "Never mind; I've found out what sex is. Now, what is science fiction?"

I still never heard from them.

My fannish career has been like that. The most recent suggested topic came from Mike Shoemaker, who wrote: "The 'Ed Cox doodle' reminded me of something I've wondered about for a long time: I don't know what it means, despite my 6½ years in fandom. Could you do a fannish article for *Oxytocic* explaining the 'Ed Cox doodle here' mythos which you & RoyTac & Others have propagated? How did it get started, what does it mean?"

For years this has been a terribly classified story; probably one of the best kept secrets in fandom. "Ed Cox Doodle" is undoubtedly the most esoteric line in fan history, and is even being used by fans who have no knowledge of its meaning. It does have a practical value, however, as it allows the faneditor to fill up blank places at the bottom of stencils; when an article craps out one-inch from the bottom of the page, just space a few times and type in "Ed Cox Doodle" and you don't have to worry any more about it.

Upon receiving this postcard from Mike, I thought: Wow, what a really great idea for an article. To tell the True Story of what "Ed Cox Doodle" is all about. I'll bet Harry Warner might even make use of the information and quote me as a reference.

Too bad I didn't know what "Ed Cox Doodle" meant.

I decided I should find out, so I could write the article.

A few days after Mike's postcard arrived I attended a Petard Society meeting and asked everyone in attendance if they knew the origination and/or the meaning of "Ed

Cox Doodle". Many of these people had known Ed Cox for years. Some of them knew Ed Cox before I was born. None of them knew what "Ed Cox Doodle" meant.

However, there was still the possibility that EdCo himself might supply the answer to this burning dilemma, though frankly I was beginning to wonder if even he knew. As he had not attended the Petard meeting, I gave him a call.

After listening to my reason for asking him to divulge this sacred information, I heard him pause to take a sip of beer before responding to my question. "Dave," he said, "I've often wondered how the 'Ed Cox Doodle' thing got started, but it is my great misfortune that I never found out." "Well," I commented, "never mind that. Just tell me what it means."

I thought that suddenly I was hearing static over the phone, but it was only Ed gargling with a mouthful of beer. Finally he swallowed it and said, "Don't know what it means. Damned if I know."

"Knock it off," I snapped at him over the phone. "I demand to know what it means. It's cruel to deprive me of this knowledge."

"Oh hell, ok," he said, begrudgingly. "There's not much to it though. Back in the late 40s, in my FAPazine, I didn't have any illustration to put in. So I just left blank spaces here and there, and told everyone they could fill them in as they pleased. That was just for one issue, but I revived the schtick in my CAPazine in the early 60s. As a result of that, Roy Tackett started leaving blank spaces in his own zine (actually he just started utilizing existing blank spaces), but he would put the words "Ed Cox Doodle More" inside the blank space. For some reason or other, other fans started doing it. Somewhere along the way it got

shortened to "Ed Cox Doodle" from time to time, and now you'll likely see either version used."

"Is that all there is to the story, Ed?" I inquired.

"Yes, that's all there is."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, that's all there is."

"This is terribly disappointing," I said, terribly disappointed.

"I'm sorry, Dave," Ed replied, sincerely.

I hung up on him.

This wouldn't do, I realized. I could never make a full-blown article out of such a weak story line. There just wasn't enough to work with. It just wouldn't cut it.

So I decided to embellish it a little. After a few minutes of thought, and a few drinks, I created the absolutely true story of how the "Ed Cox Doodle" shtick got started and what it meant.

You see, Ed Cox used to be a compulsive doodler. This was a rarely encountered psychological problem; in fact, prior to Ed it was totally unknown in the annals of mental hygiene. Ed would doodle on anything. He used to draw eyes and ears on his corn flakes at the breakfast table. At fan parties he used to approach the women who wore open-back dresses, hug them closely, and then quickly doodle obscene cartoons down the length of their spines. The letters and numbers which he used on his checks would be turned into little stick figures.

Ed was finally committed for psychological care as the result of being discovered, during broad daylight, while standing on the main street of one of the largest cities in Maine, during rush hour, drawing pictures in the snow while standing up.

After many failures to cure him in therapy sessions, it

was decided to try shock treatment. He was placed in a room painted black, totally devoid of paper or any other writing surface. His entire body was painted black, even between his toes. Finally, he was given a black-lead pencil and locked inside the room for seven days. From time to time, an attendant would drop a dozen or so puffs of black popcorn through a slot in the door, just to provide Ed with sustenance.

At the end of the seven-day period they let him out. Ed was quite cheerful, though he complained that the popcorn should have been salted. In fact, he was too cheerful. He was rushed to an examination room. A team of doctors did everything but perform an autopsy on him, after which it was discovered that Ed had doodled an entire

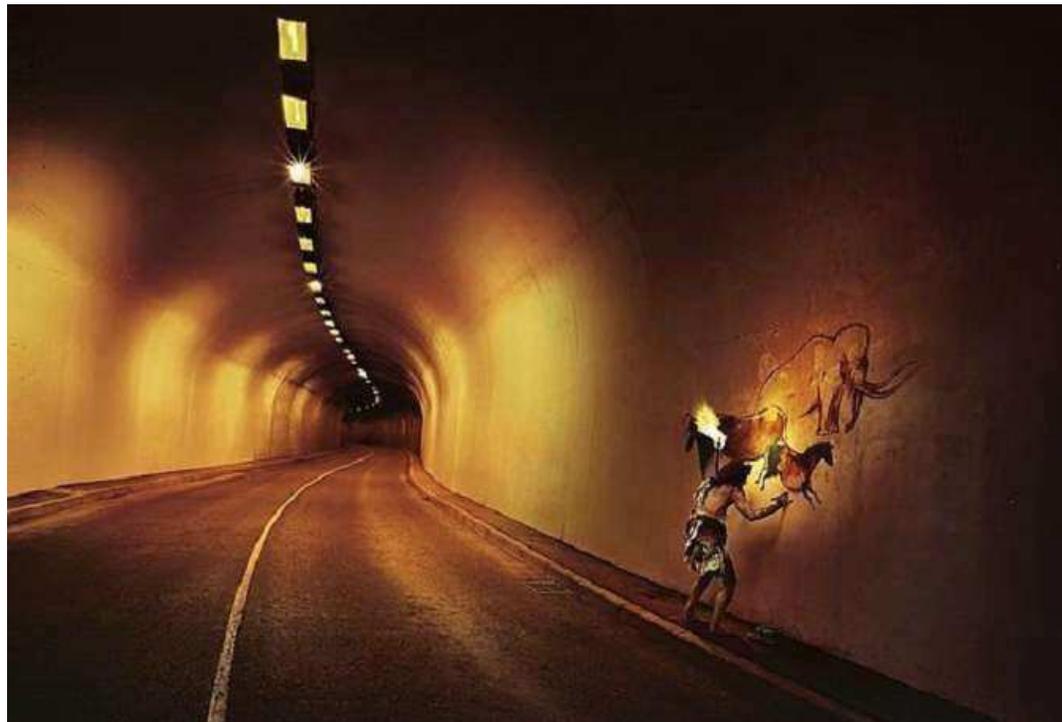
year's supply of fan cartoons on the inside of his eyelids.

However, after failing to win the Hugo, Ed lost interest in doodling and took up beer gargling as a hobby.

The "Ed Cox Doodle Here" and "Ed Cox Doodle" schtick was originated by his close friends, as an attempt to express flattery and consolation for his not having won any awards for his doodling.

And there you have it: the absolutely true story behind the "Ed Cox Doodle" phenomenon.

Over the years I've received many strange requests for fan articles on topics suggested by the editors. However, I seem to have lost sight of the reason for not honoring these requests.





Notes From Byzantium: Fitted for Fanzines

Eric Mayer

Who do you blame for setting you on the road to fanzine fandom? Did you catch an incurable sense of wonder from Robert Heinlein or Arthur Clarke? Did Walt Willis and Bob Tucker hook you with their irresistible fanwriting? In my case the villain was Mr. McGillicuddy and his note pads.

A greying sparrow with a tape measure draped around his neck, Mr. McGillicuddy presided over Boy's Clothing at the Bond Store in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. His Sunday Best suit couldn't have been more than two sizes larger than the suit he fitted me for. And how I hated to be fitted. I've always been unnaturally skinny so it was a lengthy task getting a pair of trousers to stay up on me. I endured eternal agonies having to stand still while Mr. McGillicuddy took an inseam, pinned this and that and made mysterious chalk marks on my droopy drawers. If I hadn't been pondering how he managed to hold the pins between his lips without swallowing them I would have gone mad from boredom.

However, when the misery ended he rewarded me with a whole stack of complimentary note pads. I'd never seen anything like them. Rectangular, four or five inches in length, with yellow, slightly stiff covers advertising the Bond Store, and containing ten pages, they were, obviously -- to me at least -- blank little magazines just waiting to be filled.

In those early grade school days, before I could write much more than my name, "magazine" meant picture book. I filled Mr. McGillicuddy's note pads with stories told in crayon drawings, tales about pointy spaceships spouting flames, heroic chipmunks firing machine guns and cute, lost ducklings. I had drawn pictures for years but there was something different about a series of pictures on pages fastened together between covers. Particularly after I'd crossed out the name of the Bond Store on the front cover and laboriously printed a title.

Loose pages are nothing more than whatever they each contain. Select pages, arrange them, and fasten them together physically, and they become a narrative, even if the story told is nothing more than that someone chose to join these particular pages together, in this order. Once joined, every page derives additional meaning from those around it. What's more a magazine is an object, not just a vague cloud of words or pictures. It has clear boundaries, a small country of the editor's imagination extending from cover to cover, inviting exploration and limited enough for all its mysteries to be discovered.

Not long after I ran out of Bond Store note pads I discovered the magical power of staples. A single staple can turn an uninteresting pile of sheets into an intriguing magazine. When I finally learned cursive I started to hand-write stories on lined paper. The stories weren't long.

Handwriting was a chore. I spent so much time forming loops on every letter that I could rarely fill more than three sheets. But joined with a staple, they became... something. Even if not much.

The only advantage to handwriting was that I could activate my mental processes by chewing the end of my fat lead pencil into a soft, moist brush. You can't chew on a typewriter or a keyboard. But since I outgrew big, succulent pencils I have always kept close to hand a cup of tea or coffee. I must think orally.

Although I decided to abandon paper years ago, I still prefer electronically emulated fanzines to websites and blogs. PDF zines feel most like magazines to me, probably, illogically, because the pictures and words are all bound together into one file rather existing as separate files joined by html. PDF is a stapler for electronic publications.

Growing up long before home computers and the Internet, I was limited to paper, pencils and crayons. I stapled together construction paper and wrote stories with accompanying illustrations about journeys to the center of the earth, gunfights in the old west and space exploration. I was forever running out of the gold, silver, copper, and bronze crayons I needed for my fictional space programs. I guess I favored hard science fiction because I rarely ran out of flesh color. Nor did I use the many varieties of green provided in the 120-color Crayola box. I've never cared much for green. It isn't a color one associates with the interstellar void, dead moons and rocky asteroids. If it weren't for the occasional B.E.M. I would never have worn a green crayon down enough to need to peel the paper off. My favorite images were silver spaceships spouting flames against the black construction paper of deep space.

Those were my equivalents of Elvis on velvet.

During the fifth grade my friends and I produced comic books and sold them for a few cents apiece. Business was brisk and exhausting. We chased classmates all over the playground until they decided they wanted to sit down, catch their breath and read our efforts. Presented with a potential audience beyond myself and my family, albeit still a captive audience confined as it was between the monkey bars and the witch's hat during recess, I became aware of the limitations of the magic staple. A staple might be able to create a magazine, but it only creates one at a time.

Along with my fellow comics entrepreneurs I tried carbon paper, but readers couldn't even be harassed into buying illegible inky pages that you didn't dare get near to your clothing. Besides, the exploding bomb was likely to end up on the reader's thumb before he got to that part and the whole joke would be lost. We attempted to hand copy our works, like medieval monks might have done had the works been "*The Life of Simeon Stylite*" rather than "*Elmo the Talking Fish*." In desperation we rented out our "*Giant King Cotton Annual*" taking care to erase the crossword puzzle after each lessee. There was no way we could have sold that issue for a nickel or dime considering how much silver and copper had gone into the King's outer space confrontation with his evil brother William.

When I became a teenager I left little magazines behind with other childish things. Or so I thought. Until, in my early twenties, I sent away for some of the mysterious "fanzines" I saw reviewed in "*The Clubhouse*" column in *Amazing*. The objects that landed in my mailbox were different than anything I'd seen before, yet strangely familiar. Not mass produced. Not slickly printed and bound.

Simply sheets of paper, often of a type reminiscent of construction paper, stapled together by an individual. They were homemade magazines.

I plunged in immediately with essays and drawings, humor, personal anecdotes, faan fiction, illos of pointy spaceships spouting flames. It took a few years but inevitably I returned to making magazines myself. My pesonazine *Groggy* was dittoed, often fronted by a cover printed on a hectograph., and all pulled together by a couple staples. Instead of perpetually running short of silver and gold crayons, I was always counting up the scarce yellow, orange and blue ditto masters donated by Eric Lindsay and Ned Brooks. I no longer had a fat pencil to chew on but I kept a cup of tea handy. Thank Ghu I could never find hectograph pencils. I even had a captive audience. Not classmates corralled in the playground, but similarly inclined zine aficionados who had fallen into fandom. Instead of chasing them around the witch's hat I found their addresses in loccols and sent my zine after them until they gave up and locced.

Even after I left fandom in the mid-eighties I continued making magazines, mostly "mini-comics" -- a single sheet of paper printed on two sides, cut in half, folded and, of course, stapled. Those weren't much larger than the Bond Store note pads. I also did newsletters for the zoo docents and the Rochester orienteering club.

And what was it drew me back to fandom after a decade and a half? What else? Fanzines. That's why it's called fanzine fandom isn't it? How could I resist sampling the offerings at Bill Burn's *eFanzines* when I ran across it quite by accident?

It's beginning to look as if I might have finally got over the compulsion to make my own magazines, but even so, I

can safely say that Mr. McGillicuddy and his note pads changed my life forever. Though I may have given up publishing and am trying to forget about paper, I still read

electronic magazines created by others. But I can't get a pair of pants that fit anymore.



How We Got Lost on the Way Home From LASFS! by June Moffatt

The LASFS clubhouse in North Hollywood is about 25 miles north of our home in Downey. There are a couple of routes we use to get home from the club. One is to use the Hollywood Freeway south to the Ventura, then east to the Golden State Freeway, south thereon all the way to the Long Beach Freeway and then to home. The other is to take the Golden State Freeway to the San Bernardino Freeway and then over to the Long Beach Freeway Southbound.

On July 24th we decided to use the latter route. Bad idea. The connector to the 710 turned out to be closed. On previous occasions when this had been the case, I surrendered and went several miles out of our way to the San Gabriel Freeway, which would also take us south to Downey. Oh well, I thought, I'll just take Eastern Avenue, as I had done many times when temping at the County offices in that area. As Len later pointed out, it has been a good many years since I last used Eastern Avenue, and I had forgotten exactly how it's laid out. I was thinking that, after all, Eastern Avenue runs through Bell Gardens on the way to Downey. What we hadn't known was that Eastern Avenue doesn't cross over (or under) the Golden State Freeway.

So we got down to where Eastern Avenue ends at the Golden State Freeway in a tight little residential enclave, notable for dim lights and gated driveways. We turned

around and attempted to retrace our steps (metaphorically speaking). Unfamiliar streets in the dark have strangeweird properties. When the "Eastern Avenue" signs disappeared and we got onto a street which lacked any street signs to tell us what street it was, I listened uneasily for the "*Twilight Zone*" theme. Each cross-street had its name on a sign in easily-readable letters, though. We found a Big Truck which had just parked, and inquired directions of its driver.

He said to go to First Street, turn right, and then turn right again on Olympic, which would take us back to Eastern. Now I think he must have said "go to *the* first street" because we found no street labeled "First". Eventually, we ran out of the street we were on, and turned right, which did eventually get us onto Olympic. Another kindly truck driver gave us clearer directions, and we returned to the intersection of Olympic and Eastern, turned left and found the on-ramp to the southbound Long Beach Freeway. We asked each other how we had missed it on the way down Eastern. Len concluded that it wasn't sufficiently well-marked, which I am inclined to agree with. (While proceeding along Olympic to Eastern, we crossed the Golden State Freeway and saw a sea of red brake lights in the southbound lanes, indicating a major blockage of traffic. Maybe we *did* go the better route after all!)



PURE QUILL bwf



"As one who has used many word processors for many years on multiple platforms, MS Word is the single worst piece of crap ever foisted on a gullible public. It's not just clumsy and badly designed, but it is so actively inimical to all other software and operating systems that I suspect it was introduced by the KGB as a last gasp effort at guerilla warfare, just before the Soviet Union fell." -- Steve Brown, 1/31/01

I'm writing in this here purty blue, and you're writing in that there sleek jet black. LoCs should be in either mail or RTF, which everyone has regardless of their computer's operating system (WordPad does RTF, f'rinstance, and MSWord can do it as well). The editorial address is <time3again at gmail dot com>.

"Word represents the ultimate victory of the C students from state colleges. It is ugly, difficult to use efficiently and effectively, prone to eating its own product, and produces visually unappealing results. But because you can take a monkey fresh out of the tree with feces still on his hands and teach him to write a memo in about 20 seconds, it is entrenched." -- Jim Hill, 3/17/02

Mike Deckinger <mike2004 at aol dot com> 7/15/08

Just downloaded *TIME AND AGAIN*. I do admire your uncompromising attitude towards WORD users ("*Respond in WORD and you're dead meat*", or something equally eloquent). I don't think it's quite as undesirable as you infer, and I'm confident one day Microsoft will get it right.

Send me an email if that happens. I used to be fairly decent with Word back in the mid-90s when that's what I

had to work with at the office, but it always struck me as the product of multiple programmers who never collaborated on overall symmetry. Since then, I've deleted it on any computer which came with Word installed. And, presently, I have nothing on this laptop which can read a pure DOC file. However, many people use Word primarily to create a RTF document which needlessly bears a DOC extension, and those I can read by simply changing the DOC extension to RTF. If there are pure DOC elements in the text, though, all I get is gibberish.

My only objection to travel is that it has become both unduly costly (and, if one flies), irksome and uncomfortable as well. In order for travel to be productive, it must first deposit you at your intended destination and with an acceptable duration, and then do so with reasonable ease and comfort. Air travel is gradually dispensing with amenities and offering an incomparably intolerable, strained and edgy experience as fuel costs escalate.

And if I want to be pummeled, I don't have to board a plane for that.

I have strong doubts that any character stated "*Fuck you, Mac*" in *MARTIANS GO HOME*. This was back in the 50's remember, when "*frig you*" was probably the most incendiary epithet uttered in print. The Martians more likely barked "*Screw You*", a more acceptable substitute, at the time.

You're quite possibly right. I'd have to dig out one of my copies and reread it to be sure.

I'm glad the criminally overlooked Frederic Brown is mentioned. He wrote some great stuff. I still recall the chills generated by "*Come and Go Mad*" from *WEIRD TALES* sometime in the late 40's.

Chris Garcia finds it difficult to state what makes a good zine. For me, content overrules everything else. Without a robust, compelling, content. the most eye-catching and elegant publication falls flat. (I'm reminded of *CRY*, of the 60's, which offered simple typed headings and bland layouts, but still resonated with thumpingly-good reports and faan-fiction, and a legendary lettercol.) It snared a couple of Hugos too, I believe.

Nominated in '59, won in '60.

I live in an area in which earthquakes are not only possibilities but promises. We had tremors before of varying intensities. We are sure to have them again. This is a guarantee. Further, you can prepare in advance for these inevitabilities, but you'll be granted no advance warnings, as you would in any other natural upheaval. You're on your own.

Not exactly the most cheering news, As a result, people do what they can to modify their homes to best withstand seismic shock. They purchase earthquake insurance, if they can, and maintain an attitude of protective subdued stoicism. In other words, "*don't think about it and maybe it will go away.*"

Lloyd Penney <penneys at allstream dot net> 8/10/08

I have some interest in astronomy, but never had a telescope to call my own, and I consigned that interest into the personal bin of unfulfilled dreams. Too many commitments, too many assignments, too many commitments made by parents or others, and not enough time to play and lie in the grass and be a kid. Recently, I went for a job offer, and I interviewed for it, and got the job. I am now training to be the new membership and publications clerk for the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. I really wanted the job ... perhaps I want the ambiance of astronomy more than I wanted the telescope. When it comes to numbers, I did very well in school, but those numbers were fixed because scientists told us this is what those numbers were, and they were graven in paper, our immovable and uncorrectable school text books. Now that the

numbers are changing nearly daily and Pluto is no longer a planet, there seems to be no more graven-in-paper facts. I think I preferred the age of relative certainty.

I remember in high school, there was a contest for all the home rooms to see how we could decorate our room and the hallway outside it in festive Christmas colours. We plotted, however, an anti-Christmas. Instead of red and green, we decorated in black and white, questioned Santa's heritage, and decided that Rudolph's nose was bright because of liberal doses of blended whiskey. We did not win, and they came up with a special Grinch prize, just for us, which was a dirty certificate. I'm pretty sure our teacher had her laugh, and shredded it asap.

Chris Garcia is right about steampunk ... we're working on costumes. Yvonne and I haven't done any serious costuming for close onto 20 years, but given there's no costume to recreate, just design one for yourself along some rough guidelines, we are intrigued. There appears to be a difference between steampunk events and SFnal steampunk events. There is a steampunk event in Quebec City in September, but it looks more like a rave. Three days of dancing and thumpa-thumpa. Our local media convention is promising a steampunk event, a dance and programming the Friday night of the con, with other events scheduled through the week ... panels, contests, other goodies.

There seems to be so many programmes out there that will make a PDF document out of just about anything. If I could find a programme that would make a PDF out of an old Quark file, I'd have it made.

[I think PDFCreator could make a PDF file even out of DOS](#)

For Alex Yudenitsch ... the top half of my screen has the

ezone on it, and Word is open on the bottom half. I just click back and forth, and I read the zine, and make my comments. I honestly don't know of any other way to do it. I know that adjustable monitors are available, and can swivel from landscape to portrait. A screen like that would make my own method of ezine reading even easier.

The Denver Hugos were handed out ... Brad Foster won!

[I sent Brad a note of congratulations. He responded:](#) *"I think I'm still in shock about it. After over a decade without winning, I figured my time was WAY over for winning awards for doing something I enjoy so much. If anyone had asked, my money was on Steve Stiles. I had even forgotten the Worldcon was being held this weekend, until a friend called me with the news I'd won the other night. Maybe in ten years I'll win again? Yeah, I think it should be a tradition now!"*

I have Publisher 2000, but like so many of the Windows programmes, it is not intuitive when you open it, and I'll probably have to get myself a Dummies book to make it work.

Many thanks for another zine, and I look forward to lots more.

[Slave driver...](#)

Lee Lavell <leelavell at comcast dot net> 7/15/08

Diabologic: Just after I graduated from Butler University (Indianapolis), they opened their brand-new planetarium/observatory, so I decided to go back and take a course in Astronomy. It was just an introductory undergraduate

course involving no math, and it wouldn't count toward anything (like my Masters). It was just for fun, and fun it was as we, the students became the guinea pigs for them to try out everything the telescope and the planetarium could do. Of course, most of the stuff I learned there is now out of date, as are most of the things I learned in all the other science courses I took. As I recall, we didn't even know the correct number of human chromosomes when I took genetics. Science is a journey, an odyssey. There may be side trips and dead ends. You head for a destination but you are not sure of its location. And that may not be the place you are looking for anyway, but on you go and it's the journey that's the fun and adventure.

Incidentally, I, too, have problems identifying constellations, but I am one step ahead of you, Dave. I can not only recognize the Big Dipper but Orion as well. Of course it doesn't look like a hunter...

All I Want for Christmas is a Hand Grenade: Not a lot that I can say about this except how much I enjoyed it and to say that the contest judge was an idiot. The best holiday stories usually contain some sort of misadventure. Perhaps this is because all of our own memories never really live up to all those sugar coated things that are usually presented to us. (At this point I could mention the time I "destroyed" my cousin's expensive train set gift to his son by giving him a cheap zap gun, so that he ignored the train set completely and ran around zapping everyone. (Well, it did shoot a colored light and made a buzzing sound.)

By the Numbers: John's experience certainly puts my paltry little macular hole eye surgery to shame! At this point I shall now recount a couple of abdominal operations that I

am intimately familiar with, although I have none of my own personally. (I did have my appendix out, but I was seven at the time and have little recollection of it save for the fact that the ether anesthetic made me sick to my stomach.) When I was twelve my mother's appendix burst, she ignored it for a couple of days and as a consequence almost died and spent weeks and weeks in the hospital. Around fifteen years later, one December, she began complaining of abdominal pains. I told her to get to the doctor. She said she had a doctor's appointment in a few days and she would tell him about it then. I simply said, "*Remember your appendix.*" She went and the next thing we knew she was in the hospital having her gall bladder removed. I don't think she ever quite forgave me for being in the hospital for Christmas. The other "incident" involved my ninety-two year old aunt for whom I was responsible. She called me one Saturday morning to say that she had a very bad belly-ache. I called her doctor, who fortunately was not in (he diagnosed everything as, "*Old people are just complainers.*") and got a substitute who said get her to emergency. I called an ambulance and met her at the hospital. I was immediately asked if she was a complainer so I knew they had reached her primary physician. I told them no. On examination she was diagnosed with a perforated ulcer and was sent off to surgery at once. I had her doctor over a barrel, insisting that *he* provide nursing checkups after she returned home. He didn't argue.

John's case sounds like it would a good episode for Discovery Health's "*Mystery Diagnosis*" or "*Medical Incredible.*"

Found in Collection: What can I say! Exactly, what can I

say? As usual, for some reason I have no concept as to what Chris Garcia is writing about. I am neither a math nor a computer person and I have been away from fandom long enough so that I have no idea what Steampunk is. The fault lies not in the stars (or the writer) but in my own ignorance.

King of Terror: I do love Eric Mayer's writing; it can be so evocative. Yes, terror is a completely personal thing. What frightens one person can be innocuous to another. I am subject to the common arachnophobia (or any other creature that has more than six spindly legs, for that matter). They just seem *wrong*. On the other hand, unlike many others, snakes don't bother me at all. One very odd terror that I had when Jim and I lived in our first house concerned sound. Occasionally, for no apparent reason, there would come a soft tinkling sound, like that of wind chimes. The problem was that we didn't have wind chimes and neither did any of our neighbors. Besides, one could hear them even when the windows were shut and it was a calm day (or night). It frightened me because I couldn't rationalize its source. My husband, Jim, referred to it laughingly as "The Tinkle Monster." I didn't think it was funny.

Ghost wind chimes? The last unexplained noise I encountered had me wandering around inside and outside the house trying to track it down. Turned out to be the new weather software I'd downloaded, emitting a brief noise each time it had an important alert it wanted me to look at. I deleted it and got a much quieter weather program...

Pure Quill:

Alex Yudenitsch: My solution to LoCing an ezine is three fold. If I intend to LoC the entire zine I print it out. If I just want to comment on one or two articles I print only those. If it's general comments I take notes as I read to make sure I don't forget what I wanted to say.

Lloyd Penney: I deliberately eschewed the "literary" content when I wrote my column about what makes a good fanzine. That aspect is too personal and depends on the editor's own ambitions and taste. What I was trying to express was what would make that content more accessible - - readable. Think about it. If something is very unattractive in appearance you are less likely to want to read it if there are nicer and easier things to look at.

And to John Purcell: The personality of the zine is expressed, not only by the content, but also by how that content is presented. If the zine says in its appearance "I'm a slob" and you don't like slobs you are less likely to read it. At the same time, if it's haute couture and that turns you off, well---everyone to their own taste.

Eric Mayer: Sure, one makes allowances in fanzine organization for budget considerations in print zines. However, nowadays, with the ezine there can be no such excuses.

Finally -- Another very good issue, Dave, I am glad to see how well you are holding up to the high standards set by the "other Dave."

That guy?

John Purcell <j_purcell54 at yahoo dot com> 7/27/08

Oh, my; what a fun issue your fourth issue is! Aside from that guy whining about his near-death experience nine years ago, the contents were a delight to read.

Like you, I used to always look up at the stars and wonder about them. Unlike you, though, I could recognize and name the constellations, quite possibly because I have always been - even as a kid - a bit of a Greek mythology buff. I have always thought the ancient Greeks had way too much time on their hands, and probably eventually started walking around with their heads cricked up at impossible angles from looking at the stars all the time while naming those crazy constellations. But I am glad nonetheless that your interest in science has remained firm and immutable. Good for you. I am a bit of a science buff, enough to keep up on things so that the SF I read still makes sense, even if I'm mostly an English geek. So it goes.

Okay. Here is an unsolicited advertisement. It is my opinion, humble or otherwise, that Curt Phillips is one damned fine fan writer. For two issues now you have included top-quality articles by Curt - the military re-enactor piece in #3, and now this hand-grenade story - that were both highly literate and enjoyable. Curt's a good writer. Please; keep him on your contributor's list. I really don't have much else to say except that this "*All I Want for Christmas is a Hand Grenade*" was a delightful article. Love the title! It so totally set the tone and frame of mind I had to be in to enjoy it.

Lee Anne Lavell's article reminded me of the time when I was working part-time ages ago at a McDonald's while a student at the University of Minnesota. One summer afternoon when the meteorologists had predicted only a 20%

chance of rain that day, I was outside gathering up garbage strewn all over the lot and happened to look to the west. There, rolling in with an obvious intent of major destruction in mind, was this green wall cloud. Not gray or black, but definitely green. That was not good, I knew, so I quickly finished off my rounds and ran inside to pass the word. We battened down the hatches in record time, but thankfully, the storm only unleashed a 20-minute long torrent of rain. The tornadoes that storm spawned stayed well outside the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. To this day that is still the most active 20% chance of rain I have ever experienced.

I really like how Chris described Charles Babbage. He definitely sounded like One Of Us. With any kind of luck, I will be able to get out to Chris' computer museum and see the Babbage Engine before it gets shipped back to England. It sounds quite fascinating.

Eric Mayer does a wonderful job of recounting telling tales of terror in order to scare the living bejeezus out of other kids. I never had that pleasure (never went on camp-outs when a lad) but I have always enjoyed a good ghost story, even though I don't believe in them. Like Eric says, it is the imagining of the terror, what the human mind can do to frighten itself, that is the spark of horror. The mind so easily fills in the gaps with the unspeakable, and Eric does a great job describing the scene and telling his story. This was a lot of fun, and I can't wait to read more stories like this from his childhood. Obviously, Eric owns a scarred soul, and this explains why he writes what he writes. I still like the guy, though. He is a good writer.

Dave, you did a bang-up job editing the LoCcol. Very good indeed, especially with the LoCs from some folks who really don't do much letter writing of late, namely June

Moffat, Mike Glicksohn, Earl Kemp, and Alex Yudenitsch. Sad to say, there aren't many comment hooks in the LoCs to spur some pithy commentary, but I definitely enjoyed reading everyone's LoCs.

Eric Mayer maywrite2 at epix dot net 7/14/08

What a great ATom cover. It's representational but most of the interest is in the abstract shapes and varied textures. And it fits your title fade perfectly with poor *Pixel* being eclipsed. Yes, that cover reminds me that what I really want is a fanzine just like I used to read in the seventies except delivered electronically.

Terrific illo by Brad Foster too. Apart from the scary bug -- and I do hate insects -- I love the effect of the backlit limbs.

I also applaud those stick figures you caught on the Internet. In the land of the mini-comics there was -- and probably still is -- a whole genre of stick figure comics, the idea being that you could do a comic even if you couldn't draw. I did a few stick figure minis myself, for example my homage to Mickey Spillane, *The Stick Dick*.

I was amazed, albeit not for the first time here, at the revelation that earth's well known average distance to the sun was calculated by a vote. But there you go, if facts can be decided by votes why can't we all just vote for the earth having been created 6,000 years ago by an old guy with a gray beard? Who cares what the world is really like so long as we're happy with what we believe it is like? Come to think of it, all these asteroids that drift into the earth's vicinity, do the scientists vote on how close they are going to get to wherever the earth is, more or less, according to that 1911 vote? If the Senate is ready to decide

55 to 35 that the earth is going to be obliterated by a comet can the Republicans filibuster it into missing? I can assure you I'm not going to vote that the human race was descended from monkeys. No way. I'm pulling the lever for created by monkeys. And not an infinite number of monkeys randomly separating light and darkness and all that. Maybe three or four. Fairly intelligent and omnipotent monkeys of course. Spider monkeys. Because I like them.

John Purcells' medical tale was harrowing. After reading it, if I ever start excreting gallons of blood, I'll be rushing straight to the hospital. Well, actually if that happened I would've run straight to the hospital even before reading this but now I'd run faster, or as fast as I could considering the blood loss. With the amount of blood I have in me I'd probably be dead. A neighbor years ago once reported the same symptoms but the docs never figured out what the problem was in his case. He also was told he was lucky to live but the bleeding stopped on its own. I don't want to say too much. I'm pondering a pain story now myself.

Lee Lavell convinces me never to move to Indiana, even if it would give me the chance to talk Dave Burton into returning. Weather has brushed past me. I've been at the edge of floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes -- close enough to see the results afterwards. And that's enough thanks. I experienced a tiny earthquake in Rochester, NY -- just strong enough to rattle the windows. I was, however, in the middle of a huge ice storm while I lived in Fairport, outside Rochester. This was in the days before I tracked weather assiduously on the Internet and I had no idea it was coming, or when I got up in the dark, to catch a bus to work, that it had arrived. Had I left by the backdoor I would have noticed that the yard was filled with trees brought down by the ice, not to mention that the back

door was blocked by limbs. Leaving by the front door I only noticed what looked like about an inch of ice of everything. Perhaps I should have taken heed of the strange pulsating light displays illuminating the horizon, from downed wires, but the bus was on time. As it turned out there were very few people at the office and we were all sent home immediately as the scope of the disaster became clear. The buses had stopped running but a co-worker who lived not far from Fairport kindly gave me a lift.

Chris Garcia's story about the Babbage Engine was fascinating but, I confess, I'm still not sure what the thing was designed to do. I grasp that it wasn't exactly what we think of as a computer but I don't know enough about math to understand what those tables it was supposed to produce were or were used for. I loved the bit about Babbage hating street musicians. I immediately had an idea for a story -- and Chris is welcome to it. Here's the idea. A wealthy patron offers Babbage the money to build his difference engine provided Babbage manages to live for six months as a street musician! But wait, there's more. Babbage manages to do this, at great psychological cost or hilarity depending on the tack Chris wants to take, and the engine is built. But when it is turned on, rather than producing tables a weird vibration animates the aether and every street musician in England falls dead. That's right, its real purpose was to eradicate street musicians. But there's one more twist...you saw it coming...Babbage himself falls to the ground and in his dying moments he realizes, alas, he was always truly a street musician at heart.

Finally a brief comment on Curt Phillips' grenade story. What a great tale. The finale reminded me a bit of the chaos in Thurber's *The Night the Bed Fell Down*. I really

have nothing to add because I haven't been anywhere near any kind of grenades but this is a wonderful piece. I guess if this story didn't win the Christmas contest at the hospital that place must be full of literary geniuses.

I better stop. I could've written a new column by now. Great issue. You're getting me enthused damn you.

Well now, that's my fault again, I suppose...

We Also Heard From:

Mike Kramer: The article "*All I Want For Christmas Is A Hand Grenade*" almost had me rolling on the floor.

Your science piece was good also. In that regard, Mark Twain had a quote: "*In the space of one hundred and seventy-six years the Mississippi has shortened itself two hundred and forty-two miles. Therefore ... in the Old Silurian Period the Mississippi River was upward of one million three hundred thousand miles long ... seven hundred and forty-two years from now the Mississippi will be only a mile and three-quarters long. ... There is something fascinating about science. One gets such wholesale returns of conjecture out of such a trifling investment of fact.*"

Joyce Katz: What a gorgeous issue.....

June Moffatt: Love the articles by Curt and Jim. It sounds to me as if Curt had more sense than his father and uncle put together. And it's so nice to know that GOMER PYLE had it right. As for Jim's tale of woe, I had an internal bleeding problem in 1999, though mine was caused by an overdose of blood-thinning medication to take care of a pulmonary embolism. No fun in any case.