

wabe 1

(original cover went here)

Wabe #1 is a zine under the editorial triumvirate of Jae Leslie Adams, Tracy Benton, and Bill Bodden. A table can stand on three legs; let's see if a fanzine can. *Wabe* is a fanzine which intends to publish all sorts of odds and ends but will particularly highlight art and writing from Wisconsin fans, provided they overcome their Midwestern reticence and give us some.

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Art credits: Cover by Jae Leslie Adams, working with a pen made from a cut up pop can, a copier, and the Random House Dictionary of the English Language (Unabridged Edition, 1966). Dover Clip Art throughout; Mike Peterson 15, 16; Tracy Benton, 17.

Wabe is available for the usual. Locs, submissions, and art may be sent to any of us; it gives us something to fight about. You could even email all three of us at jaeleslie@aol.com, billzilla@mailbag.com, and benton@uwalumni.com. For trades, please add all three of us to your mailing list: Tracy Benton, 108 Grand Canyon Drive, Madison, WI 53705; Bill Bodden, P.O. Box 762, Madison, WI 53701-0762; Jae Leslie Adams, 621 Spruce St., Madison, WI 53715.

Fore WORDS

BY JAE LESLIE ADAMS

A loong time ago, Tracy & Bill & I began to talk about doing a fanzine together. Even then it had been a long time since much fanzine action had come out of Madison. We had all been in Turboapa (the Madison apa) together. That publication had grown to apparently suck up all the faanac in Madison outside of WisCon. To further entice Tracy (who had published an apazine under the title of "Gyre & Gimble") toward a publishing cabal I devised the name "Wabe": short, for ease in reference; derived with anglo-saxon purity from a favorite classic work of logical & mathematical fantasy; and denoting an entire field of possible common endeavors.

Besides our various apazines and letterhackings, we all in due time published personalzines (Tracy's CAZBAH, Bill's RAW GOOF, and my own ZIGHN) on the Madison club's Gestetner duplicator. But we all found that getting up the gumption to publish and mail out anything to the wider fandom outside of the thirty Turbans is an irregular business at best. Other stuff keeps happening (life interferes terribly with fanac), and no one breathlessly awaits one's personal publishing efforts, so setting one's own deadlines is fraught with obstacles. Perhaps as a group, I theorized, we might drag one another through the process. Because on the other hand, it's not that big a deal. After doing a monthly apazine for any length of time, as we all have for some years, the mechanics of it are clearly not the biggest problem.

Then at Corflu 2000 in Seattle, Bill and I were drafted onto the "defending" team in the Iron FanEd competition, based on the "Iron Chef" Japanese competitive cooking show, which is rather like professional wrestling. (Bill has described all that in his conreport, "Sea-Tacked and Space-Needled.") I had been delighted with the premise of the contest, ever since Tom Becker had proposed it late one evening in the hotel bar at Aussiecon 3.

The ancient tradition (such as it is) of fanzine production tells us of mythic times when the heroes of yore would assemble on an appointed day for fanzine publication, with perhaps a column already jotted out, and then hurl themselves headfirst at the keys of their typers like archy the cockroach to fill pages with their mental meanderings composed direct to stencil. I had indeed seen such perform-

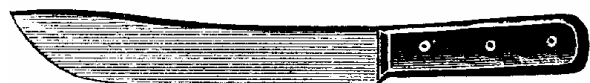
ances echoed in the way Andy Hooper filled out the columns of the Wiscon 20 at-con publications with his orotund sentences; in the collaborative one-shot the Madison group composed at Badger Bowl during an evening of bowling and pool. It can be done. And I am tired of all the excuses, however artful.

Perhaps with the success of the Iron FanEd event, I muse, a regular course of such events could train a new generation to the discipline of the Iron Fan that would surpass even the elder gods' achievements. The Iron Fan Triathlon would incorporate three events into the time limit (which in Seattle was set at the one week between Potlatch and Corflu). Events in these fields would test all the fanish skills: (1) publishing a fanzine, (2) extemporaneous public speaking, (3) organizing a room party. (Restaurant parties would be suitable venues to qualify for the public speaking competition, but would not count as a room party event.)

In any case when we finally assembled to set up equipment for the Iron FanEd competition, our team began to actually discuss what we had brought to the brew and I threw in the name "Wabe". We spent a surprising amount of time discussing the meaning of the word. Perhaps it could also be derived from the term in Japanese aesthetics, also spelled "wabi"... Then to incorporate the required secret ingredient, salmon, someone (I think it was Stu Shiffman) came up with "Roe vs. Wabe", the title of our Iron-FanEd-Losing fanzine.

Because the challengers, Team Plokta, won with "Steelhead", by a vote of the convention membership. Both teams produced six-page fanzines in one hour. But just to whine a little, they had cool Japanese headbands, and digital cameras, and canned salmon, and nerves of steel in the face of clowning play-by-play commentators, seeing as they had actually published together before. It was an inspiration I guess. Now that we're home, though, we have the entire (nonsearchable) archives of 160-odd (very odd) issues of the Turbo-Charged Party Animal Apa to draw on. Since we are required by the rules of competition to impale ourselves on our fabulously sharp Japanese cooking knives, you could look on this as our first effort in that direction.

—Jaemon
(Digital Monster)



Sea-Tacked and Space Needled

BY BILL BODDEN

Another Corflu has come and gone, but the memories always linger for me. Corflu 2000 will always have a bit of a stigma attached to it in my mind, as the Corflu where I lost my job. Corflu didn't have anything to do with losing my job, and a number of other fannish types were in the same boat when Channel Space cut back its staff. Channel Space Entertainment, Inc. is a web site that deals in information about collectibles of all types: I worked in the Toy Division with Andy Hooper as my supervisor. Channel Space is preparing for its Initial Public Offering of stock, and needed to hoard their cash reserves to fend off potential takeover bids, so money had to be saved from somewhere, and personnel turned out to be the most viable source. It was tough to really enjoy myself with that little cloud hanging over my head. Still, it was something of a relief to not need to find time to put in a day's work along with mingling and being a tourist, but I started keeping very careful track of my available cash from that point on.

One thing that always stands out about Corflu is the Guest of Honor speeches. The proud Corflu tradition of drawing a name from a hat to select the Guest of Honor, on the theory that any attendee is worthy of being the GoH, is a remarkably democratic one. Including only very few examples when the fix was in, so to speak, every GoH I can remember has more than held up their end of the bargain by providing creative, often unique and always entertaining performances, and lending a great deal of credibility to the random selection idea. I am reminded of the 1993 Corflu in Madison, Wisconsin, where Jae's name was drawn. I remember at the time feeling slightly concerned

that there would be the perception of a fix, but come time for the speeches, Jae impressed everyone. I remember feeling a great sense of pride for Jae; at that time she was pretty new to fanzine fandom, though she'd been writing for years. Jae was immediately rewarded for her efforts by being added to numerous mailing lists.

Of course, Corflu 2000 Guest of Honor Ken Forman's occasional lapses into his spiel as a tour guide at the Hoover Dam were highly amusing, and generally well timed. Ken is a gregarious sort, and his appearance at any Corflu tends to bode well for the level of camaraderie. He makes the thought of touring Hoover Dam at least interesting, which is far more appeal than the concept held for me previously. Plus his hints at offering the "secret tour" to friends and fellow fans really puts the hook into a goof like myself. Another goofy event was the unveiling of the Orgasmatron, in actuality a scalp massager that more closely resembled a giant, open-ended egg whisk. Alison Scott was selling all-too-brief scalp massages for \$1 a throw, with the money being donated to the TAFF fund. Numerous fans (including yours truly) could be seen with this odd device perched on top of the heads and being suggestively bobbed up and down, with blissful expressions. Later in the Con-suite, Pam Wells later paid for me to have another go, just to see the look on my face. Alison obliged, and explained that some people didn't care for scalp massages, but that often sliding this device of Satan up and down on one's bent kneecap was quite soothing to those who didn't favor the scalp usage. She then demonstrated this on my left knee, and asking how it felt, got the reply "Oh it's fine, but this" (pointing to my right knee) "is the knee that hurts." She fell for it, and I got my both of my achy knees massaged for free. Cool.

The "Iron Faned" was a great idea, and Tom Becker deserves kudos from organizing the event. Based on the popular Japanese game show "The Iron Chef", the challenge was to create a fanzine on site in one hour, utilizing the "secret ingredient", salmon. I had a marvelous time, and was impressed with both teams' zines, though the nefarious Plokta Cabal clearly had substance on their side. They also had nearly one full weeks' head start on the American team, having taken the suggestions that they could work on articles in ad-



Fig. 1. A Seattle consuite. All containers shown hold excellent coffee.

vance very seriously. We Americans (except for Stu Shiffman, who banged out a marvelous cover ahead of time) all decided individually that we'd rather have the "flying-by-the-seat-of-one's-pants" atmosphere common to producing one-shot fanzines, and so didn't prepare much in advance of the event. Intense labor in advance seems to go against the spirit of the event, as I feel something is lost when that happens. This is not to say that the Plokta folks did anything wrong; prep work was actively encouraged, and they made excellent use of their time. However, I would like to see participants in future installments of "The Iron Faned" produce the entire zine, such as it may be, from scratch within the one-hour time slot. The spirit of Roscoe would doubtless look upon such an event with great approval. We may have lost the competition, but at least we had Roscoe on our side.

The downside of the event for me was that no material of any kind from Jae made it into "Roe v. Wabe", including her carefully hand-calligraphed cover. Judging by the number of laptops available for the event, the idea, proposed originally by Andy Hooper something like fifteen years ago, of producing one-shot fanzine at any time and from any locale is certainly much more viable these days. Regardless, one will still require access to electricity: either that, or a strong back to carry all the extra batteries. Andy's idea for the ephemeral "Wilderness One-Shot", which included lugging a portable typewriter, along with food, water, several

tents, and two or three canoes around the woods of Minnesota, was embraced enthusiastically at the time by a number of Madison fans, none of whom could be reached for comment at this time.

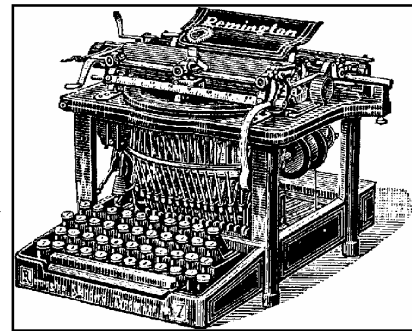


Fig. 1. Early laptop. Often caused femur fractures and tissue damage.

Last but hardly least, the softball game was another clear example that fans CAN have fun doing athletic things, with limited threat of injury. Even the Brits, they of scant exposure to softball, showed their shining "Good Sport" teeth, and gritted their way through what was doubtless an intimidating but hopefully fun experience. A theory was advanced that the team with the most Ploktans would be the eventual winner, and this in fact turned out to be the case. That Andy Hooper was able to commandeer funds from somewhere to produce baseball caps for everyone was a stroke of genius, and a very generous gesture as well. Kudos to the entire Seattle Corflu committee for a job marvelously well done!

BEAD NEGOTIATIONS (1)

JAE LESLIE ADAMS REPORTS FROM THE TRUFEN LIST

(Posted Feb. 19, 2000 on Trufen in response to Linda Krawecka's query on behalf of the Brits planning to travel to Corflu, "You guys got any wampum?")

After careful consideration, I am prepared to offer All The Glass In Seattle in exchange for the Greater British Isle (both in situ naturally). Pound for pound I think you will see this is good value in the current market particularly considering the influence of the Japanese and the long-term maintenance but we will have to work out the details when we meet personally. A week is hardly long enough to survey the goods, but I have a number of very nice rocks with holes in 'em too that I picked up on the Oregon and California coasts and might include in the deal, which are small enough that you can actually carry 'em around with you.

The Long Aside

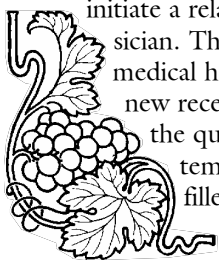
BY ANDREW P. HOOPER

Editor's note: this is a reprint from Andy's zine "Black on Francis", which appeared in the August 1998 issue of the Turbo-Charged Party Animal APA. It's an excellent example of the way that Andy Hooper can write engagingly on damn near any subject. -Tracy

Well, I still haven't been able to finish the survey of Asian man-ape myths. I have actually gone so far as to establish a dummy file in Pagemaker to see how many pages the text I already have would occupy, but I still haven't finished the section on the Almas of Mongolia and I just unearthed some very recent scholarship on the Orang-Pendak of Indonesia that I want to digest— maybe in September. See, I had all this stuff ready to go and then I started feeling lousy— mostly due to a large, unpleasant sty that blew up on my lower left eyelid, and made me spend the better part of four days in constant pain as a result. This also happened to be a span of days when we finally got some of the sweltering heat that has been oppressing the rest of the country all summer, and the great south-facing windows that do so much to warm the apartment in the winter served to make the computer completely untenable during daylight hours for almost a week.

After enduring this for a time, I resolved that I had to see a physician. To me, it was not that clear that all I had was a sty; it had an angry red circle curving sympathetically below it across my upper cheek, which looked to me like the indicator of an infection. Over the past few years, I've been prone to skin irritation and infection in hot weather, most notably requiring surgery to drain an awful boil in 1995, and I thought this could easily be some sort of recurrence of that general syndrome.

Unfortunately, Carrie's firm, through which we receive our health coverage, had changed carriers since my last visit to a doctor's office, and I had to initiate a relationship with yet another physician. This meant page after page of medical history paperwork to complete, new reception procedures to learn, all the quasi-ritual of entry into the contemporary medical culture. As I filled out all the illness and injury I could remember, I mused that



if an intelligent person was really able to list all their symptoms in useful detail, and could communicate an encyclopedic knowledge of their previous health experience, a computer database offering diagnoses in descending order of likelihood and appropriate steps to correct or treat them would be at least as useful to me as the doctor was going to be. I figured I'd end up swallowing some extremely nasty antibiotics for a week, and the infection would clear up.

Happily, my new Doctor was not too busy that afternoon, and was open to finding a whole raft of problems with me, and after writing me the expected prescription for antibiotics, whisked me away to have a large volume of blood drawn. Having read my family history of cardiac disease, she was just rock-certain that my cholesterol was too high, and that she'd be prescribing a low fat diet when she saw me again a week later. I clumped off to let the phlebotomists do their magic, then had to drive elsewhere to find a pharmacy specifically authorized by the insurance carrier to profit from my misery. The antibiotics were every bit as nasty as I'd expected, and I took the whole week-long course, even though the sty (remember the sty? this is a song about the sty) started going down again the moment I walked out of the doctor's office.

One week later. The space age digital scale is disturbingly eager to report the extent of my monstrous obesity, but then, I'm six pounds lighter than I was last week. Which is apparently the weight of water I sweat off walking the 2.35 miles from my apartment to the clinic— ha ha, says I, would that cholesterol-sodden human beluga you see in me be willing to crank off that kind of walk in this heat? I even had the foresight to bring a fresh shirt so the air-conditioning wouldn't render the sweat-soaked original into an icy rag clinging to my back.

Sitting down in the examination room, Dr. Liss saw no point in playing around, and took my legs out from under me with the news that my blood sugar had come back with a level of 415! Normal people have blood sugar levels between 60 and 120, and there was no chance of misinterpreting what my elevated level meant—I was a full-on diabetic. My numbers were dangerously high, and I

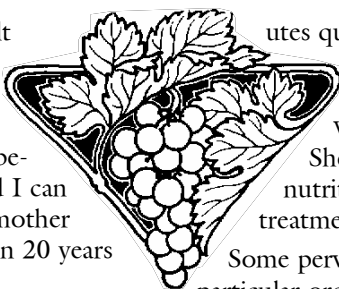
had to do something about them. I felt pretty upset, but it didn't come as much of a surprise. There were several diabetics in my mother's family, my sister suffered from gestational diabetes when she was carrying her son, and I can remember being warned by my grandmother to expect something like this more than 20 years ago.

On the other hand, my cholesterol level was only 40, which is really very low. Second prize, I thought.

Somewhere in the middle of all this angst, before that second office-visit, I got the news that Laura Spiess had died. I found myself remembering her face as Dr. Liss detailed the potential for liver damage in alcoholic diabetics, then twittered happily at the news that I neither used tobacco nor consumed alcohol excessively. Laura always used to laugh at my jokes, I recalled, although I hadn't heard her laugh for a number of years. Laura's death touched off a storm of condemnation for the policies and values of the contemporary medical community on the Timebinders list-server, people that had not known her but were still incensed that she had died waiting for a new liver to become available for transplant. None of them were willing to offer their own livers for the task, however.

After helping me to put as positive a spin on the situation as possible, Dr. Liss turfed me off to a nurse-educator (which sounded to me like an odd multi-class D&D character, like a Fighter/Thief, or a Cleric/Chiropodist) at the diabetes treatment center in the labyrinth of the University hospital proper. I was impressed with her ability to get me an appointment at short notice, but also foolishly bummed at the prospect of a second straight day spent in medical offices. What were you expecting, I asked myself, you're diagnosed as a type 2 diabetic one day and you go off to the beach the next?

The nurse educator was, more than anything else, annoying. She seemed very concerned with determining under whose medical jurisdiction I fell—would I be remaining Dr. Liss' patient, or coming under full-time care by the physicians at the diabetes center? The very strong indication I got from the nurse was that I was expected to choose the latter, and abandon those silly little internal medicine residents at the Roosevelt St. Clinic, they didn't get anywhere near the impressive kickbacks from drug companies that the staff at the diabetes center did. She scrawled a series of glucometer brand names on a notepad emblazoned with a huge ad for Prozac. She spent a number of min-

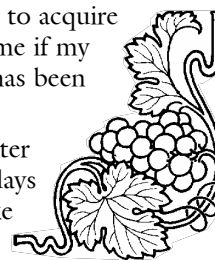


utes quizzing me on what Dr. Liss had already told me, and launched into triumphant prepared statements whenever I got a fact or term wrong. She was *very* intent that I report to a nutritionist for the real substance of my treatment program.

Some perverse impulse has led me to reject that particular order so far. I know this is partly because during my abortive attempt to lose weight during the summer of 1992 (maintaining a low-fat diet, running fan programming for Worldcon and attending Clarion West are not really compatible activities), when I was diagnosed as merely being "incipiently diabetic" several physicians ago, I was sent to a nutritionist who was completely unable to tell me anything which was not intuitively obvious or covered in a six-page pamphlet she handed me on the way out the door. I still have that six page pamphlet, as well as dozens of pages of other information I picked off the table in the waiting room. I guess that while I'm quite ready to accept the idea that I'm not actually qualified to prescribe drugs or interpret the results of my blood work, I am able to understand the concepts of measured portions, dietary exchanges and removing simple carbohydrates from my diet without bringing in yet another party to bill their hours to my insurance carrier for communicating this information. The American Diabetes Association website also has an immense amount of useful information on it, far more than the nurse-educator-chemist was able to impart in the 30 minutes she could spend with me.

Yet, I give her full credit for communicating the ugly truth I'm facing; no matter what sort of drug I go on, in time it will lose its effectiveness, and I can look forward to daily injection of insulin sometime between 5 and 15 years from now. She gave me some useful charts and handouts for later study, which gave me most of the information I wanted. She gave me a prescription for a blood sugar meter, and the lancets and reagent strips used in its operation. She warned me that insurance companies still try to deny coverage to Type 2 diabetics, even though the state legislature passed a law over a year ago that compels them to cover our diagnostic expenses. She was quite right; at this writing, I'm still waiting to acquire the glucometer which will tell me if my endurance over the past week has been worth anything.

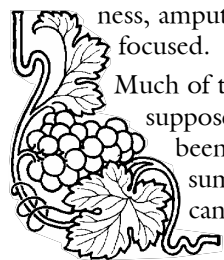
She also told me that I had better prepared to endure some bad days and nights. Type 2 diabetics like



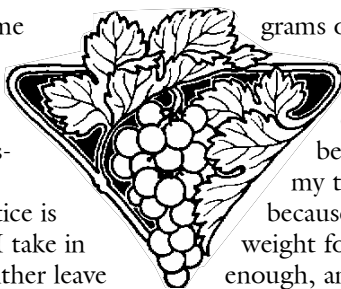
myself generally produce at least some insulin, but the molecular receptors in the cells of our digestive and renal systems which bond with the insulin and make use of it in processing sugars are either absent or non-functional. What this means in practice is that the vast majority of the sugars I take in retain their original structure, and either leave the body through urine, hammering my kidneys like a gong on the way out, or continue to race around in my bloodstream, coating many of the vascular surfaces of the body, and acclimating my brain to a profoundly high-sugar environment. The various hypoglycemic symptoms I've exhibited in the past issue entirely from my brain's perception of the high-sugar state as being normal—I suspect that for the past five years, anytime my blood sugar has dropped below 200, I've suffered the kind of mood swings, sweats, headaches I've come to associate with being really hungry. So the question which confronted me was this: What was my brain going to do when confronted with a permanent drop in the amount of sugar in my system? The nurse left me with a paradoxical suggestion. While they didn't want my blood sugar to drop too precipitously, there was no denying that I would have to adapt to living without so much sugar in my system. Once I started to make the change in my diet, going back on it would only delay my brain's acclimation to the low sugar regimen. It sounded like she didn't want me to go Cold Turkey on one count, but insisted that I do so on another.

(“Cold Turkey” is a very odd colloquialism. I wonder what its etiology is. I'd go look it up if I could concentrate on anything for more than 30 seconds.)

I had a half bottle of Cherry Coke in my backpack when I left the hospital. I'd purchased it the previous day, drunk half of it before reaching the clinic and put the rest of it away for later. When I got home, I took it out and stared at it for a while, then got some ice and poured it into a glass. I chugged it all in one long swallow. That's the last “added sugar,” sucrose, whatever you want to term it, that I've had since being diagnosed. I've been pretty strong and have not been tempted to slip. Thinking about cardiac or renal failure, blindness, amputation of limbs— it's easy to stay focused.



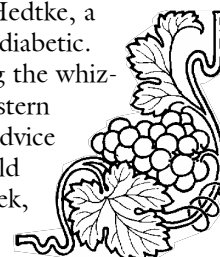
Much of the sugar in my diet, as I had supposed, came from the soda I'd been drinking. I placed my consumption at the equivalent of three cans a day, a minimum of 120



grams of nasty sugar. It only constituted about 50 percent of the total sugar I was consuming per day, but that was because of the huge number of calories I have been consuming every day since I was in my teens. That had to come down as well, because although I have been steadily losing weight for almost two years, it hasn't been nearly enough, and there is some question as to what degree the weight loss may be due to my inability to process the sugar I eat. This also confuses me slightly, as from what I understand, one of the reasons why weight loss is so critical for diabetics is that fat cells consume insulin in the process of making other fat cells, meaning that there is that much less to go around in processing sugar. Whatever the reason for the program may prove to be, I seem to be able to hack 1,000 calories out of my daily intake without really feeling appreciably more hungry. So maybe the process of weight loss which had stalled will start again.

The week which followed was no fun. I had headaches, which by the end of the weekend became constant and powerful—three Tylenol didn't even ripple their surface. My sinuses were congested and dripping all the time. For a day, every time I tried to take a drink of water, it seemed as if some of the water went into my airway, causing violent coughing fits. I felt weak, and levels of exertion which had no effect on me the week before left me feeling shaky and sweating wildly for hours thereafter. Finally, just yesterday, the headaches subsided to a dull sense of pressure in my head. Just as that happened, I began to have the worst heartburn I've ever felt in my life—deep, burning pain in my esophagus, which lingered along its entire length whenever I tried to swallow, and plenty of time when I didn't. I have to admit that I did find myself wondering how I could be doing a healthy thing for myself—prior to the diagnosis, I was generally feeling in the best health of the past 20 years. Since then, I'd been in constant pain. I could see why people had difficulty following their doctor's orders in regard to this condition, even if they knew they were courting a horrible death by doing so.

My salvation, or at least the news which gave me the good humor to persevere, was a conversation I had a few days ago with John Hedtke, a Seattle fan and another Type 2 diabetic. John has apparently been seeing the whiz-bang endocrinologist of the western hemisphere, and by taking his advice on diet, and exercising like a wild animal three or four times a week, John is now completely off



medication, and keeping his blood sugar levels well within acceptable levels. He's had numerous other health benefits from his program, and I'd love to see if I can get where he is. The difficult part for him has been eschewing alcohol, and ice cream. For me, the prospect of life without another taste of Reese's peanut butter cups is much more concerning.

Still, getting the news that I might be able to cheat the slow process of degrading function associated with diabetes drugs gave me something truly positive to shoot for. I'm on 500 mg daily of a drug called Metformin, with the commercial name Glucophage—isn't *that* appealing— and the intention of my doctor is that they will ramp up that dosage as I become acclimated to the drug and as is necessary to bring my blood sugar down. Well, I'm

hoping that the dosage doesn't have to go much higher, and that it will soon come back down again, hopefully to nothing. I've been diabetic for quite a while, and I've probably done some serious damage to critical systems of my body by not aggressively seeking a diagnosis sooner. But now that I've finally begun the process, I'm thoroughly committed to it, and I can't imagine it's ever going to be a lot harder than the past week has been. So that's why I don't have more on the Asian Big-foot mythos for you. And how was *your* week?



BEAD NEGOTIATIONS (2)

JAE LESLIE ADAMS REPORTS FROM THE TRUFEN LIST

(March 13, 2000)

Bead negotiations are in progress. As you may recall, I had formed the plan to offer All the Glass in Seattle in exchange for the Greater Isle of Britain (both in situ), and Linda Krawecka had given indications that she would favorably consider such an offer. I had been hoping we might tour some of the more spectacular Seattle sites together, and to this end I scouted out working art glass studios and samples of Chihuly glass in the Seattle Art Museum and the airport. But my quest for the fabulous bead store I remembered from my last visit to the Emerald City was disappointed—it was gone.

Nonetheless I had come prepared, and at a favorable moment in the Coflu weekend I tendered to Linda the offer of consideration in the form of a string of trade beads of particularly fannish provenance. They had been gifted to participants in the Always Coming Home performance at Wiscon 20, which was an event particularly devised as fannish tribal offering to author Ursula K. LeGuin and the rest of the audience as a participatory celebration. Linda seemed touched by my sincere offer. Next day I was delighted to see Debbi Kerr wearing the same beads.

Our negotiations were surely seeing some kind of success! We had a deal, and the brits were on the line. Other indications were that my offer was being taken seriously. Ian Sorensen approached me concerning certain maintenance problems with his house.

Then, I don't know, they counteroffered the isle of Jersey, in exchange for Rhode Island. As a guileless native of these american shores (born & bred in the heart of the western wilderness) I suspect the wily traders of practicing on me a classic bait-and-switch. I hear it is a very fine island. But sight unseen!—I am not sure about the responsibility I might incur for Tobes. What could possibly make them think that I would be interested in a small island populated only by a charming but inebriated fanboy? It must be that they want to keep Martin Smith for themselves.

Under Cover Destinations

BY TRACY BENTON

I was watching a bit of television this evening which led me to think, oddly enough, about some of my favorite books. I was engrossed in a BBC production, *Michael Palin's Hemingway Adventure*. I've really enjoyed Palin's various travelogue shows, particularly the first, in which he reproduced the journey of Phileas Fogg in *Around the World in Eighty Days*. In this recent program, he visited the places which Ernest Hemingway's books had brought to life for him. He watched a bullfight in Valencia, Spain; walked the grasslands with Masai guides near Mount Kilimanjaro; even visited Hemingway's birthplace in Oak Park, Illinois. I loved the way that Palin suddenly whipped out a copy of *Death in the Afternoon* and referred to it while sitting in the stands of the bullring. But this all led me to wonder: do any of my favorite books describe places that I'd like to visit?

I've occasionally done this type of thing backwards. After Bill and I spent time in Monterey, California, we felt quite guilty for failing to study John Steinbeck's *Cannery Row* in advance. I did pick up a copy used after we got home, but haven't yet read it—it got misplaced in my last move, I think. That same trip we visited the Winchester Mystery House in San Jose, which directly led to my reading Michaela Roessner's excellent book *Vanishing Point*. But I don't think that I've ever gone to a specific place because I've read of it in a specific book.

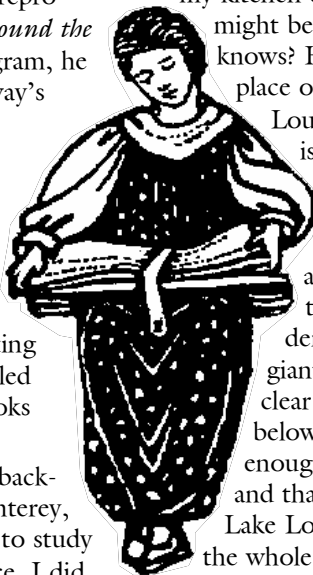
Of course, many of my favorite books are set in entirely imaginary settings. It's a bit hard to physically visit Carroll's Looking-Glass Country, or Katherine Kerr's Deverry. Also my beloved historicals are right out without a time machine, like the Elizabethan England envisioned in Scott & Barnett's *The Armor of Light*, or China circa 700 A.D. as in Van Gulik's "Judge Dee" mysteries. And some of my favorite books are set places I'd really rather avoid anyway—like Kim Newman's Victorian England under the reign of vampires in *Anno Dracula*. So, what does that leave?

For one thing, Dick Francis. My favorite Francis book is *Proof*; the protagonist is a wine expert. Francis describes wineries and wine in such loving detail that you want to go stomp some grapes. He

doesn't really invoke a particular vineyard, though, so it's easy to solve that itch with a run out to the Wollersheim Winery, a mere half hour from home. Or you could walk into my kitchen. Due to some subconscious obsession with grapes, I've decorated my kitchen cupboards with vines and fruit. It might be traceable back to Francis, who knows? He is directly responsible for some place on my "must visit" list, though: Lake Louise. In his book *The Edge*, the setting is a transcontinental train journey across Canada. Near Banff, several characters visit Lake Louise: "The path round the lake wound up hill and down, sometimes through close-thronging pines, sometimes with sudden breath-stopping views of the silent giants towering above, sometimes with clear vistas of the deep turquoise water below in its perfect bowl." This was enough to make me look for a photograph, and that sealed it; someday I must get to Lake Louise. In fact, I wouldn't mind making the whole journey; to take a train from Toronto to Vancouver sounds like a wonderful trip, so long as you have a sleeper. Probably expensive, too, but maybe one day; I hope the trains aren't gone by the time I have the money and leisure to make the trip.

And speaking of money, it's undoubtedly Tim Powers' fault that I ever got interested in Las Vegas. His novel *Last Call*, full of gambling superstitions real and unreal, combining Golden Bough with Golden Nugget, lends Sin City a weird mystique in my mind. On my first trip to Las Vegas, I didn't really care for the place. But between my first and second visits I read *Last Call*. While I didn't seriously think I would be watching for the smoke to pool over the center of the poker tables, it did give me a different perspective on the city. I think this led me to experience the place more open-mindedly the next time, and now I know I'll have to go at least once more sometime soon.

Books I read years ago did make me want to visit their settings. One example is Phyllis A. Whitney's *Island of the Birds* (if I recall the title correctly). It was about a young girl who goes to live on Mackinac Island in Lake Michigan. I remember being



fascinated by the description of a place where cars were banned and the island sought to recapture the feeling of the late 1800's. And her *Mystery of the Green Cat* made me want to explore San Francisco—Fisherman's Wharf, Chinatown, and someplace called Gump's. Having now visited the Bay Area several times, I don't think I've ever yet found Gump's, but the book was written back in the fifties. I suppose it's long gone (sigh). Is there a whole different category of books that make you want to shop?

Some books evoke images of spiritual, rather than commercial, places. In my rather WASPy upbringing, there aren't really any holy places; sometimes I feel as if I'm missing something there. So it's very refreshing to read Tony Hillerman's stories of the desert southwest. His detective Jim Chee struggles between his responsibilities as a "modern" policeman and his desire to be true to his Navajo culture. The place names are intriguing, too: Tsai Skizzi Rock, Rainbow Plateau, Tuba City, Window Rock. Hillerman is apparently highly respected by the Navajo nation for his accurate depiction of life on the reservations. He's also one heck of a writer, describing the sky, the desert, the heat, the snow, the plants, the wildlife, all in terms that make you picture where the tale takes place. The setting is an important part of his stories, not just a backdrop. I'm determined to see the Four Corners area for myself sometime, if only to see the exact shade of pink that Hillerman paints into the sunsets in his books.

Finally, I'm afraid that I'm going to have to

overcome my abhorrence of long flights to see Lyme. I have little confidence that it will in the slightest resemble what Jane Austen saw when she visited it, but at least the sea will still be there. *Persuasion* is my very favorite Austen novel, and she captures such a sense of anticipation in her characters as they make the journey to Lyme—to meet friends and to see the sea—that I catch it whenever I reread the book. Seacoasts rank high with me; while I have scant interest in being *in* the ocean, I definitely love to *look* at it. Lake Michigan, the Pacific Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean: all beautiful. But to go to Lyme, with good friends, and walk along a sea wall, recite a little "Lady of the Lake", and return to an inn for dinner—that's something I must do, and I blame it on Jane Austen. While I'll pass on falling off the steps and suffering a head injury, I wouldn't mind the part where the eyes of admirers turn to look after me.

Alas, after using up most of my vacation on my trip to Seattle this year, it will be a long time before I can make any of these journeys. And I'm still waiting for the development of a reliable teleportation device! I'm not sure which I dislike more: sitting on a plane; or sitting in the airport, waiting to get on a plane. Or maybe the worst part is wondering whether your luggage has also made the trip. Frankly, I'm just too much of a control freak to enjoy letting the underpaid employees of the Friendly Skies take over my destiny. I hope to see the day when I can get across the Atlantic the touch of a button; until then, I'll have to settle for a few good books. If nothing else, the incidence of lost luggage is much lower.



THE 22 SECOND FANZINE REVIEW

Bento 11 is a snappy little (4" x 5.5") zine. Easily readable despite small size, jam-packed with essays, satire, fillos, a puzzle, and a rather tasty-looking butterscotch brownie recipe. Handy to hide inside your prayer book and well worth getting caught over. Available by editorial whim or "the unusual" from David Levine and Kate Yule, 1905 SE 43rd Ave., Portland, OR 97215. — TLB

Middle WORDS

BY BILL BODDEN

Fanzine production in the US has slowed to a crawl over the past year with Channel Space's Collecting Channel having swallowed up so many of North America's prolific fanwriters and artists, turning them into some measure of filthy pros. It is with mixed feelings that many of those same fans find themselves suddenly having a great deal more time on their hands. With luck, this will lead to a surge in domestic fanzine production while those of us recently dispossessed search for work.

Producing a fanzine is clearly a labor of love. There isn't much money in it, and the egoboo isn't always very dependable. Why do fanzine fans bother to set their scribbles to paper, then, when there is seldom much reward? It has something to do with communication; the root of fanzines comes from the earliest days of fandom, when fans were far-flung, travel was almost prohibitively expensive, and telephones were nowhere nearly as commonplace as they are today. Mailing fanzines to widely dispersed addresses across the country was the next best choice, and in this way fans kept in touch with each other. Since then, the fanzine itself has evolved very little. Technology has improved the methodology of production, but the fanzine itself has remained largely unchanged for approximately seventy years. Lately, more and more fans are turning to the Internet for their fanzine fix, and numerous fans are publishing regular, online journals. These serve as readily accessible forms of communication, and are vastly less expensive than mailing paper zines to everyone in the East St. Louis phone book, for example.

However, the feeling isn't the same. There are few pleasures warmer or more fuzzy than receiving mail addressed in a more personal fashion than "occupant". When the mail in question comes from someone one actually knows personally, it's that much more special. It says that the person sending the zine values the opinions and friendship of the recipient, and is always an instant pick-me-up for me after a long day at the data mines. Electronic zines don't have nearly the same impact. The lack of the tactile sensation of holding the small bundle of stapled papers detracts immediately from my enjoyment of the experience, and while I doubt absolutely that such is the intent, online fanzines and journals seem so much more self-centered than mailed zines. The fact that I must

go to them rather than them coming to me is hardly a blow to my ego, but it also provides less emotional attachment and warmth.

Mind you, I'm in no way suggesting that e-zines are inherently evil. They are, in fact, the least expensive way I know of pubbing one's ish. Certainly, if one misses the tactile sensation of the paper one could easily print out a copy, but I assure you, it isn't the same. It's also possible for people literally around the world to access the zine even if they aren't necessarily on the mailing list. When the price of a stamp in, say, Bulgaria, is paid for by nearly half a day's laboring, the value of e-zines becomes perfectly clear.

The most important thing in all of this is that we keep publishing. If you send me a link to your homepage so I can read your online zine, I promise I won't sputter or proclaim you the second coming of pure evil from the 8th Dimension. I'll probably sigh, however, and feel older than I am, wishing for a return to "the old days" of fanzine glory.

—Billzilla

THE 22 SECOND FANZINE REVIEW

In *The Crooner Takes A Solo*, Paul Kincaid covers such diverse topics as going to an REM concert, his small but personally meaningful collection of photographs of the American Civil War, and taking his wife Maureen on a hot-air balloon ride for her birthday. An engaging writer, Paul weaves remembrances of his recently deceased father, whose cartoons Paul used to illustrate the zine, with anecdotes on the subject matter at hand. Paul doesn't mention what one can bribe him with in order to obtain a copy, but finding out will be well worth the effort.

Paul Kincaid, 60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 5AZ UK —WJB

Fan and Superfan

BY JAE LESLIE ADAMS

Wearily setting aside my notes for an overdue conreport on a convention now defunct, I took up a book of George Bernard Shaw, only to cast it aside in dissatisfaction. It was only a sorry reminder that Mark Hamill in any role whatever, from Skywalker to Amadeus, would never appear now in our opening ceremonies. Seeking refuge from such dreary thoughts I lay poring over STET 9, The Old Fan's Almanac, and fell into a dream.

Exterior: a midsize starship has crashed landed in a cornfield, coming to rest a few yards from a busy interstate highway.

Interior: a man with a goatee, wearing a doublet and other period garb, sits alone in his room. He appears pensive. It is Don Juan in Hell. The door stands open, and a young woman in Renaissance garb appears, with a candle.

ANNA: Are you still here?

DON JUAN: It's *my* room party.

ANNA: But didn't you notice all the shaking, and the impact! we've crashed!

DON JUAN (gloomily): Not here, no one's crashed. You're welcome to sleep on the floor if you like. Plenty of room.

ANNA: They're all down in the hall outside the consuite. Where the consuite was.

DON JUAN: The door's open, you don't have to crash. Come right in.

ANNA: After all that's happened, I would think you'd come see how everyone was.

DON JUAN: You could tell me. Come sit down. (offering her his seat)

ANNA (impatiently): There's nowhere to sit. Besides, I have to find a new laptop. Someone down this hall left one in the room and said I could use it.

DON JUAN: Someone?

ANNA: Someone other than you, yes. I left them all in the hallway. Ted and Jim were holding forth there when I left, and Harlan was in the banquet hall, managing triage. You could help! The consuite's completely gone, and the pool exploded, and all the water drained out!

DON JUAN: So there would be someone to talk to there.

ANNA: Yes, or at least someone to listen to, at any rate.

DON JUAN: You have always been such a good listener. They could all learn a thing or two from you that way. You think I don't pay attention to what's going on, but I knew when the ship was going down. There was nothing I could do about it. You always said my ego was a big problem, but I have no illusions about my abilities in a leadership role. I've been sitting here thinking about it as a matter of fact. I'm no superfan, I'm just read a bit and watch the usual stuff, and I like cos-tuming. I didn't have much to contribute that wasn't already in ample supply. But your interests are so various and wide-ranging, I always like to hear what you have to say. It's too bad we couldn't get it together. I could listen to you.

ANNA: You! I don't have time for this. I'm on a mission.

DON JUAN: I could help. You need a laptop, you say?

ANNA: Honestly! I have to find another, and download the ship to it. We're going to have to move. There's a Sheraton just up the road. It must have a pool.

DON JUAN: No consuite?

ANNA: We'll salvage what we can from here.

DON JUAN: What about the condoms that were available in the consuite?

ANNA: None left—big enough for you.

DON JUAN: Ooh! You always cut me to the quick!

ANNA: You'll have to go look for yourself. I'm busy. I never understood why you hold yourself back from making some contribution. Ever since you had that swordfight with the Commander you've been waffling about what your involvement ought to be. That was the last thing you ever did of any note, it was great theatre, and it came naturally. Now you're all hung up on this Hamlet schtick. Frankly I like a man who can commit to something. Put it down on paper at least. Make yourself useful. You could help me check all these rooms.

DON JUAN: I thought I heard some groaning about two doors down. Didn't want to disturb them.

ANNA: But what if someone's hurt! Didn't that occur to you?

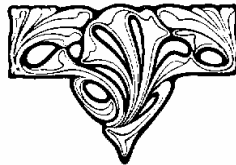
DON JUAN: Of course it did. I was thinking it over. But they didn't *sound* hurt.

ANNA: Well, while you think it over, I'll be on my way. There are a lot of good people here who have survived, and I don't know even half of them. We have to make sure no one gets left off the list when we move. Unless they want to be left, of course. You could think about that for a while I suppose. I have to keep looking. (Candle fluttering, she exits.)

DON JUAN: Hmm.

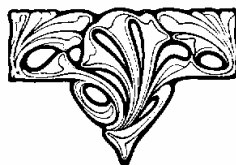
ANNA (receding down the hallway) A father for the superfan!

September 28, 1998



THE 22 SECOND FANZINE REVIEW

The Old Fan's 2000 Almanac is a remarkable piece of work. Dick and Leah Smith admit in the enclosed errata sheet that this is by far the most complicated fanzine project they've ever worked on. This certainly appears to be true, but that doesn't make it any less cool. A veritable font of fannish wisdom, including everything from a souped-up version of last year's impressive fannish wall calendar to a vast assortment of fascinating fannish facts, including the origins of the fannish pantheon of gods. An outstanding effort. Dick and Leah Smith, 410 W. Willow Road, Prospect Heights, IL 60070-1250 —TLB



That Ole Black, Etc.

BY TRACY BENTON

What I want to know is, *how did the card get inside that lemon?*

There we were in Las Vegas, back in January 1999. We were deep in the bowels of Caesar's Magical Empire at Caesar's Palace, inside a theater called The Secret Pagoda. We were watching sleight-of-hand being performed by a sarcastic, white-haired man whose name escapes my memory. A woman in the audience had signed her name across the nine of diamonds and returned it to his pack of cards. He went through several variations on trying to produce her card, striking out each time, finally "giving up" and going on to some other tricks.

And at the end of his act he produced a lemon from thin air, cut it open, and revealed her card, complete with signature.

So what I want to know is, *how did he do that?*

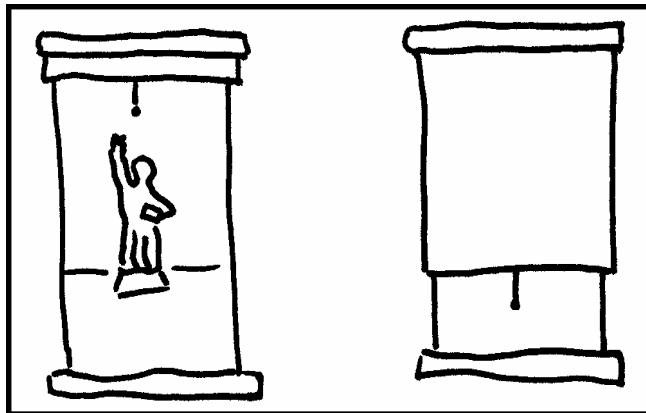
I wasn't always a fan of magic. I remember being very small here in Madison, Wisconsin, and seeing Wayne the Wizard at the local Shakey's Pizza. The coolest thing about him was the balloon animals. Before I got to the world-weary age of 11 or so, I thought magic was... okay. Then I blew

it off for years. That stuff was so fake, right? When I was a teenager, I had a lot of initial interest in David Copperfield. Not because his magic was any good—I mostly just thought he was really cute, with his smoky dark eyes and hair. He didn't take his act so seriously, either, and had a lot of humor in his television specials while avoiding the saccharine earnestness of Doug Henning, the "hippie" magician who had some fame in the 1970's.

But gradually, Copperfield added an awful lot of his own ego to his shows, becoming solemn and mysterious and focusing more on overblown illusions like making the Statue of Liberty disappear. Oh, pardon me; I mean "vanishing the Statue of Liberty." I bet you didn't know that "vanish" was a verb you used *on* something, didja? Anyway, those huge illusions don't appeal to me at all; they

scream "camera trick". So once again I started turning off the television when a "magic spectacular" came on.

A few years ago, though, three acts caught my attention and began to restore my interest in this art. The first was the infamous, notorious pair of Penn & Teller. They showed an entirely different side of magic. Funny, irreverent, and occasionally just plain sick, watching them is like watching a train wreck. You know something awful is going to happen, but you just can't turn away. While I would occasionally catch them years ago on Saturday Night Live guest spots, their recent "Penn & Teller's Sin City Spectacular" series showcased some of their best stuff. Teller escaping from a cage full of rats sticks out in my memory somehow. They reminded me that magicians aren't just



Lesson 1: How to vanish the Statue of Liberty

a bunch of somber guys in tuxedos pulling scarves out of the air—they try to make you remember that magic is fun (okay, and weird and twisted).

The second was Max Maven. He bills himself as a mentalist. I first ran across his name years ago in Games magazine—he presented puzzles in

which he offered the reader choices of cards or symbols on the page, then appeared to "see the future" by predicting which would be chosen. Actually, he is a very clever logician, and carefully arranges things so that the "predicted" outcome is the only possible one. He appeared on a couple magic TV specials as well. The greater part of his act is mind-reading. While that sounds pretty nuts, if you've seen footage of him at work, the "how did he do that" factor overcomes any cynical reactions you have. He attains a strange balance at the end of his presentation: I feel that he's clever, but he doesn't make me feel stupid. Somehow he manages to allow the audience to feel intelligent, which allows me to enjoy magic that much more.

The third was an act called the Pendragons. This consisted of a husband-and-wife "grand illusion"

team. Up until I saw them, the grand illusion thing was turning me off. Magicians typically don't speak to the audience during them, and the "David Copperfield ego syndrome" seems to creep in. But the first time I saw Charlotte and Jonathon Pendragon on television, the gee-whiz factor took over. They perform a classic illusion called Metamorphosis: tie Charlotte up, put her in a bag, put the bag in a chest, lock it up. Jonathon jumps on top, raises a curtain in front of himself, and hey presto, Charlotte's there instead. Got that? Now, imagine the whole trick taking about 45 seconds. They do it really, really fast. The next time I saw them on TV, it was Jonathon in the bag first, and Charlotte was wearing a different outfit when she stepped out of the chest.

Now, I might easily have gotten tired of that except for something pretty funny—the next time I saw that same illusion on a different special, Charlotte did not get out of the bag. She stayed kneeling in the chest with the bag pulled up around her. Why? Well, apparently the top portion of her second skimpy outfit wasn't put into the bag to begin with... you get the picture. Now *there's* something to make an act stand out. But they're professionals—no panic, no fumbling, just an extra large grin on Jonathon's face as he realized why his wife refused to exit the bag. It made a big point to me: it's all in the presentation.

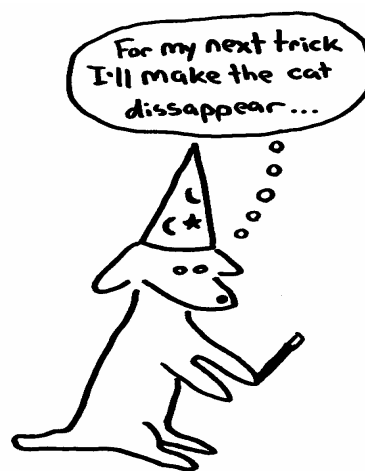
Since seeing that show I've watched many, many television magic specials and enjoyed the PBS documentary on the subject. I've seen many of the same tricks over and over again—but I don't get tired of them if they're presented well and with original twists. Close-up magic has become a particular favorite of mine; the way some of those people manipulate cards is incredible. Not only do I enjoy the "wow!" of this, I get a kick out of seeing how much skill is involved. I'd love to see some of this stuff done from about a foot away. (Although preferably not in a poker game.)

The Pendragons were also performing at Caesar's Magical Empire last January, in Sultan's Palace Theater, and I felt really lucky to see them live. You just don't get to see a lot of world-class live

magic near where I live. But when Charlotte Pendragon came on stage, I realized that we were also being treated to another kind of illusion—Charlotte Pendragon and her Amazing Breasts. I've seen enough footage of her to know that she wasn't always a D cup! And let's just say that her outfits now take advantage of the extreme, er, firmness. It was a bit distracting at first. Luckily, the Pendragons didn't just do big illusions for us; they put effort into establishing a dialogue with the audience, making themselves seem less, uh... artificial. We had a great time, and got to see Metamorphosis in its split-second glory, if without fascinating costume mishaps.

So I continue to be a fan of magic. We hope to go back to Las Vegas this year and perhaps catch Lance Burton's act in his huge theater at the Monte Carlo. (They don't call Las Vegas "Magic Capitol of the World" for nothing.) His main appeal to me is his friendly approach to big-scale magic. Again, it's all in the presentation. I'm really a skeptic and cynic at heart; to get me to suspend my practicality long enough to enjoy something that's supposed to "amaze" me is hard. But through intelligent dialogue, humor, and a high level of skill, the best modern practitioners have restored my magical sensawunda.

And I still want to know how that damn card got in the lemon.



"I work for the government. I can afford to be a socialist."

For the Birds

BY BILL BODDEN

My name is Bill; I'm a birdwatcher.

Now, despite what some Brits may think, this does not refer to gawking at members of the opposite sex, though I have been known to participate from time to time. No, what I'm referring to are the feathered variety of birds; them what build nests and migrate south for the winter, and lay eggs and all that. My interest began when I was around eleven years old; our neighbor had a birdfeeder, and one winter, a pair of Evening Grosbeaks came to feed. In Wisconsin, Evening Grosbeaks are quite rare; they generally only come this far south if the food supply up North gives out. Grosbeaks are larger members of the finch family; they have thick beaks for cracking open sunflower seeds, their favorite food. Also visiting the feeder regularly were Cardinals, Cedar Waxwings, and Blue Jays, and the variety of colors, shapes and sizes was intriguing. The hook was set.

Birdwatching took the place of hunting in my family. Coming from a fairly rural area, one was looked at askance if one didn't at least own a gun, and I am the only member of my family to never have discharged a firearm at any point in my life. My brothers' experience with guns was of the bb-gun variety, while my father's only real firearm use came during World War Two in basic training. Several neighbors were deer hunters, and every November we were often greeted with the charming sight of a gutted deer hanging from a neighbor's tree to allow all the blood to drain out while not staining the new carpet. Still, I understand the appeal of hunting; the thrill of the chase is not unlike spotting and identifying an unfamiliar species of bird.

While in Seattle for Corflu, I had the opportunity to visit my brother Mike in British Columbia. Mike is a professor of Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Victoria, and my birding mentor. We fell into the hobby at about the same time, catalyzed by those same Grosbeaks, and we've both seen our interest wax and wane as chances to get out and spend time looking for birds presented themselves or not. Mike and I have been birdwatching together now for more than twenty years, and when I was 13, he and I made a foray to the Gulf coast of Texas during winter break to see Whooping Cranes. Mike and I have spent many an



early morning creeping through marsh and wood looking for the elusive this or that, and we rarely had a disappointing day of it, though we may not always have seen the specific bird we'd been looking for.

I brought my binoculars with me on this trip, knowing Mike would have scoped out likely sites in advance, and we spent both mornings of my visit rambling around in a rental car looking for exotic (to me, anyway) species. We were rewarded with many fine views of waterfowl, as migrant ducks often winter on the West coast of North America while waiting for the inland waterways to thaw sufficiently. The first surprise of the trip was a pair of American Black Oystercatchers rooting around a rocky bit of shoreline looking for tasty, crawly things in the mud. We were close enough to these two to see not only their bright red beaks and pink legs, but also their bright red and yellow eyes. They seemed less than concerned about our close proximity, and went about their business while we casually spied on them. There were ducks aplenty in late February, and we counted representatives of something like ten different species, including all three of the merganser varieties, mergansers being ducks with long, serrated bills specifically for catching fish. We also spotted a couple of Bald Eagles, several Great Blue Herons, a pair of Mute Swans, and Ravens.

The thing that I find so fascinating about bird watching is the amazing variety of colors, shapes, sizes, and food gathering specialization. For example, did you know that Flamingoes' feathers are only pink when they have plenty of shrimp to eat? They use their unusually shaped bill to sift shrimp and small crustaceans from shallow, tidal waters. Zookeepers began to discover that without enough

shrimp in their daily diets, Flamingoes' feathers turn white. This is an example of how food source can have an impact on wildlife, but a more dramatic example is the Everglade Kite, also known as the Snail Kite. These large, hawk-like birds feed solely on one species of freshwater snail; if the snail population drops, as has been happening in the Florida Everglades, the numbers of these Kites also drops in direct proportion.

And in many cases, seeing some birds is a race against time, with their habitats diminishing rapidly.

Birdwatching is actually one of the fastest-growing hobbies in the United States, and many South and Central American nations are reaping the benefits of this growth through capitalizing on the closely related Eco-tourism boom. The fact that birdwatching is having a positive effect on the global environment is a pretty big contribution in my book. It's also a convenient excuse to get outside and have a bit of exercise, which in our couch-potato/e-mail-driven society is often hard to come by.



THE 22 SECOND FANZINE REVIEW

The Accidental Fanzine: Beautiful art by Dan Steffan, beautiful layout by Nevenah Smith, but this venture by Sheila Lightsey doesn't require either. Highly unusual articles on the subject of bathing while traveling, very well written (could use a few diagrams, maybe?). Warning: violent hair removal section. You will know fear. Possibly still available from Sheila Lightsey, 263 Elm St., Cambridge MA, 02139.

After WORDS

BY TRACY BENTON

So, well, there it is then. We have labored and brought forth, with much anguish, a fanzine. It's about twice as long as we thought it would be, but when you turn me loose with a stack of clip art, what do you expect?

When Jae and I discussed the look of this fanzine, she urged me, "Avoid the overproduced look. How far into crudzine territory are you willing to venture?" And I guess the answer is, well, I'm no Nevenah Smith but not too damn far. Consider today's fanzines. At one end you have the ultra-spiffiness of *Plokta*, made possible by spending far too much money on a laser printer. They can print photographs beautifully, for heaven's sake. And then on the other hand you have... what? Well, best not to get too specific I suppose (liability issues). But consider how many different ways one may err: using every typeface you own, choosing regrettably bright (and hence unreadable) paper, showing off your 5 right-justified columns in a charming 8-point font (might as well be big gray stripes down the page for all I can make of it). These are all just dreadfully hard to look at and sending one to Jeanne Gomoll is just going to make her reach for the bicarbonate of soda and who wants that on her conscience?

But I think what Jae might have been reaching for was the charm of yesteryear, when Pica and Elite didn't seem like such space hogs, and everything was mimeo'd, giving the type a soft hazy nimbus like they put around the blonde heroines in poorly written television movies. Back when it seemed perfectly reasonable to set things off with a pair of dashed lines because that was what you had and it was that or solid ones. Like a vintage *Hyphen*; they were selling some at Corflu. I really like looking at those old zines, I do, but somehow I just can't manage to produce one that looks a bit like it!

Now, let's face it, maybe I just don't have the history for this type of thing. Back when I put my first fanzine, *Cazbah*, together, I wanted kind of a *Trapdoor*-ish look because I liked the way that zine was so comfy to hold and read (and still is). So Steve Swartz and I spent innumerable hours in his

99°F attic and he tried to teach me a little Page-maker and mostly I let him do all the work. So while that zine was mimeo'd, frankly it never came within breathing room of a typewriter until Harry Warner Jr. wrote me a loc on it. *Monstrous Crow* I laid out on Microsoft Publisher (you know, Page-maker for non-geniuses). And same for this zine you're holding. So was there really any chance that it could approach what Jae was talking about? Now Jae, she does actual cut and paste. With, you know, those scissor things. And glue. But I'm just not coordinated enough for that.

I did try, really I did. I started out by setting all the body text in sort of a Courier thing. But I just got hives all over. Without a proportionally-spaced font this zine would have rivaled the King James Bible for length and readability. So off I went to *Format Type Styles* (hurrah! Hurrah for styles!) to desperately choose something better. I just *couldn't* leave it like that. I just *couldn't*. Maybe someone out there is stronger than I...

Marty Cantor has had a lot to say on the Trufen list lately about his reluctance to publish a zine on the web. His main objection? Lack of control over how his zine will appear. I can't argue with that. Not when I've sat here tweaking *Wabe #1* for hours on end. But have we become too control-freakish? Maybe things were better when fans let the stencils fall where they may. You know. Splashing that corflu around. Devil may care. Full speed ahead and damn the typos. Has all this superfluous technology (to steal a phrase) just made us get way too picky about our fanzines?

I don't know. In a way, I'm sure things are easier these days. The fanned has more choices about how to present her material. And I think back to when I got my electric typewriter with the *correction ribbon* in it. I was full of joy. Technology certainly can make life easier.

But when I read reports of fans gleefully pricing color laser printers, my blood runs cold.

Hyphen, we barely knew ye.



WABE #1

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“And ‘the wabe’ is the grass-plot around a sundial, I suppose?”

said Alice, surprised at her own ingenuity.

“Of course it is. It’s called ‘wabe,’ you know, because it goes a long way before it, and a long way behind it.”

“And a long way beyond it on each side,” Alice added.

“Exactly so.”