

The

Issue 107  
August 2004



Knews

*The Knarley Knews* -- Issue 107  
Published in August, 2004

## Table of Contents

Item	Page
Table of Contents/Colophon	2
Editorial	3
Reflection On ... Reflection On Rodney Leighton	6
Sue's Sites: Oregon Sue Welch	7
Idle Thoughts 1 Terry Jeeves	8
Attack of the Killer Battery Milt Stevens	9
InterLOCutions (alphabetically)	13
Sheryl Birkhead	21
Ned Brooks	14
E.B. Frohvet	16
Trinlay Khadro	20
Robert Lichtman	22
Joseph T. Major	13
Lisa Major	14
Joseph Nicholas	17
Lloyd Penney	19
Joy V. Smth	16
Dale Speirs	15
Milt Stevens	18
WAHF List	22
Fanzines Received in Trade	23
Conventions/Back Cover	24

## Art Credits

Artists	Page(s)
Sheryl Birkhead	Cover
Brad Foster	24
Terry Jeeves	7
Joe Mayhew	13, 23
Scott Patri	9
William Rotsler	5, 15
Marc Schirmeister	20
Ruth Shields	18
Kyle Welch	12

All uncredited textual material is the responsibility of Knarley.

Editorial insertions are denoted: ☐TKK:...☐ or  
Ms. TTK:

## Editorial and Subscription Policy

The Knarley Knews is meant to be a general purpose fanzine whose primary goal is to maintain lines of communication between the editors and those beings they consider to be friendly. With this in mind, the following are the general guidelines.

1. All contributions may include a pseudonym (e.g. Knarley, Sydrous, Shit-for-Brains) at the contributor's whim.
2. To get this fanzine you are required semi-yearly to initiate contact with the editors (black-holish behavior is not rewarded). This could be a postcard, phone call, your fanzine, or contribution of your choice. The editors, of course, prefer a contribution so they don't have to write so much. This notwithstanding, you may purchase copies for \$1.50 each.
3. Advertising is free provided that the ads are of interest to the editors and that it is for a non-profit organization.
4. It is the editors' policy not to unduly censor or restrict the ideals of free speech. (We like a good argument as much as the next guy.) However, we reserve the right to make minor content and format changes to fit your piece in or to add appropriately denoted editorial comments.
5. Contributions are currently acceptable using the following computer formats.  
IBM: Virtually any format  
MACINTOSH: Virtually any format
6. The editors are open to bribes of any size, although their efficacy is highly suspect, and have never turned down a financial contribution.

*The Knarley Knews* is published bi-monthly by Parody Publishers. The entire issue is ©2004 by Parody Publishers as Freeware (reproduction allowed with proper citation) unless otherwise copyrighted. Contributors please take note.

The editorial board is:

Henry L. "Knarley" Welch -- Editor  
Letha R. "Mom" Welch -- Layout Editor

All comments/requests should be sent to:

*The Knarley Knews*  
1525 16th Ave.  
Grafton, WI 53024-2017 USA  
(262)375-8763  
welch@msoe.edu OR  
<http://people.msoe.edu/~welch/tkk.html>



**Next Issue Deadline:** October 5, 2004 (so I can take the issue to Ditto)

# Editorial

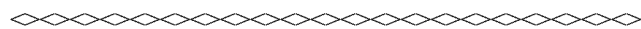
(In which Knarley gets to spume!)

Isn't technology wonderful? I'm sitting here in bed writing this fine editorial while simultaneously the laptop has a high-speed wireless internet connection so I can have all the distractions that entails. As little as five years ago I doubt that anyone would have found such a claim as common place or even reasonable. Thus we continue to move forward into the SFnal future we read about in decades past. OK so maybe the pocket calculator and the personal (much less portable) computer did not appear in much of the early SF. I recall reading plenty of Heinlein and other authors who had pilots flying spaceships using slide rules and tables of calculations and now we have college students who have never seen a trigonometry table in any of their math textbooks.

Despite the high-tech bedroom companion and the career as a professor of engineering I am still, in my own way, a bit of a Luddite. My wristwatch is analog (you know the kind with moving hands) and in fact the only numbers on it are the days of the month which I have to manually correct every-other month. The last calculator I purchased for myself was for \$8 sometime in the late 80s and it is a full-featured scientific model for which I haven't had to change the batteries since it is solar powered. In fact I probably wouldn't even own the laptop with the wireless card if it wasn't the computer supplied by my employer. (This doesn't account for the wireless card which I received as an add-on last Christmas.) I do own a Palm Pilot, but I deliberately purchased it right after they phased out this particular model since no one wanted gray-scale anymore.

The Palm is a wonderful tool for keeping your calendar and having a bit of scratch paper around. The problem with it is that you have to turn over your calendar completely to it or it isn't worth having. What good does it do to try to look something up if you still have to consult that calendar on the refrigerator?

I'm not certain where this discussion is leading so I'll just leave it there. It is up to you to decide if the editorial is better as a result of its unusual place of composition.



Speaking of technology, many of you pointed out that last issue had a bit of an apostrophe problem. Some of you may even recall I had the same problem about two years ago. The difficulty is that I don't remember what I did to solve the problem back then. If you go to the web page for the zine you'll see that the PDF version has all the requisite apostrophes. Since I put the issue together I've deduced that this is a font problem. This is a two-part issue. The first is that the common character coding being used today on most modern operating systems is Unicode. This is a 16-bit coding scheme that can handle all of the traditional western European

characters (ISO8859-1) which is the extension of ASCII used for most web pages as well as the tens of thousands of characters/glyphs in use by such languages as Korean, Japanese, and Chinese (which is still a bit of a simplification). One of the rules of Unicode is that some characters can be generated using different (somewhat equivalent) glyphs or as combinations of others. For example ö can be a single glyph or a combination of the o and the umlaut glyphs. When you get to punctuation, especially like quotes, things become complicated as the word processing and desktop publishing software substitute smart quotes that curve left and right, etc. Herein lies the problem.

When I was trying to print the last issue I had all kinds of problems with the atypical fonts such as the "InterLOCutions" header and the editorial inserts in the LOC column. It was substituting something like 12-point Courier which not only looked bad, but didn't display the entire text. I eventually tracked that to one of the printer settings getting reset. (I have no idea how.) When I changed it from "Use Printer Defaults" to "Download as Needed" for missing fonts it took care of the problem and I was so relieved I totally missed the apostrophe problem until I was stuffing envelopes. The reason that the PDF is OK and the printout isn't that the PDF is generated entirely on the computer which has the version of the font used by the publishing software and the printer has its own version which is missing that particular smart quote. So much for thinking that all versions of the Times Roman font are equivalent. Changing the setting to "Download All Fonts" should clear up the problem.

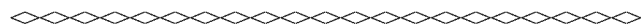
This issue really plays havoc with Letha's cross-stitch charts. The cross-stitch community uses a set of three custom fonts for all the special symbols used to show each of the floss colors in patterns. Unfortunately the original creator of these fonts failed to consider smart quoting and used characters seemingly at random so that some of these special symbols are allowed to be substituted under the rules of Unicode and thus the charts change when they get printed and thus may not always agree with the floss key.



More and more the creation schedule for *The Knarley Knews* is driven by Letha's travel schedule since it gives me greater access to the Mac for putting together the issue. I used to do this by my academic breaks, but it doesn't work that way as well anymore. Letha is currently in Riverside, CA and will be there until Monday morning so I get the Mac all to myself.

The day she gets back is also the day I open the next chapter in my life. Monday evening is the first night of law school orientation. It includes a sample lecture for which I have some reading I'm supposed to do in advance and will likely

put off until sometime on Monday since it is only a few pages long. In the meantime I've done my homework to learn a bit more about what to expect. I read *One L* which is about a first year at Harvard Law in the 70s and watched *The Paper Chase* movie which is from the same era. By all accounts it isn't really like that anymore. Less emphasis is now placed on dehumanizing the students and curricular time is even spent on teaching students how to be lawyers as opposed to legal scholars. I suppose I'll have a better idea in two weeks after real classes begin.



If June was the month of trips to California and visits with my family, July the month for the two week trip to Pennsylvania to visit with Letha's family. It started with a five day conference at Bucknell University on "How to Engineer Engineering Education". I learned a fair amount about educational theory and some techniques to try in the classroom. I still don't have any easy answers for how to go about applying this to the abstract subjects I typically teach. One of the things that became clear is that MSOE is well ahead of the curve in much of this. We've known for years the value of labs that force the students to adapt what they've learned in class and this is fully in-line with the latest educational theory. I also got to see that many of the other participants struggled much more with many of the ideas and even some of the basic tools of our trade like PowerPoint.

Bucknell University is about 15 minutes from where Letha's mother lives so we combined the trip with rehab activity on her house. In the two days between the end of the conference and the arrival of Letha's brother Dave from California we took an overnight trip to Herkimer, New York which is noted for its naturally occurring quartz crystals which are faceted. They are called Herkimer diamonds. Despite five years as a graduate student in nearby Troy I never visited the open pit mine. I much prefer finding my own mineral specimens even if it is in an established mine. It just isn't the same when you go to the store to buy them.

After Dave arrived we got started on the house. Letha's mother has lived in this house going on 30 years. She has always had limited income and about 20 years ago the plumbing failed on the second floor and one by one the knob and tube wiring did as well. Rather than fixing the solution was simply to cut the wires or snap off the piping and disconnect it in the cellar. The space wasn't entirely abandoned as some of the rooms have been used off and on for years using extension cords.

In the late 80s we traveled down about once a month to work on the house, but after a few trips it was clear that Letha's mother was uncomfortable with some aspect of what we were doing and came up with ways of avoiding getting the work done. Over the intervening years she's hired a series of contractors of questionable competence and ethics and has had one disaster after another. She also divided the house into two apartments and rented out the back one for years. In

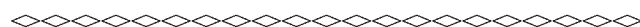
the last year or so she had a contractor get the back at least livable and she moved in there after her tenant moved out. This latest contractor did some nice work and some terrible work all at the same time. He used nails in the stairwell that protruded into the closet, put a ceiling fan on the same circuit as a ground-fault receptacle so the fan periodically trips the ground-fault and couldn't manage to get the hot and cold hoses hooked up to the proper side of the kitchen sink.

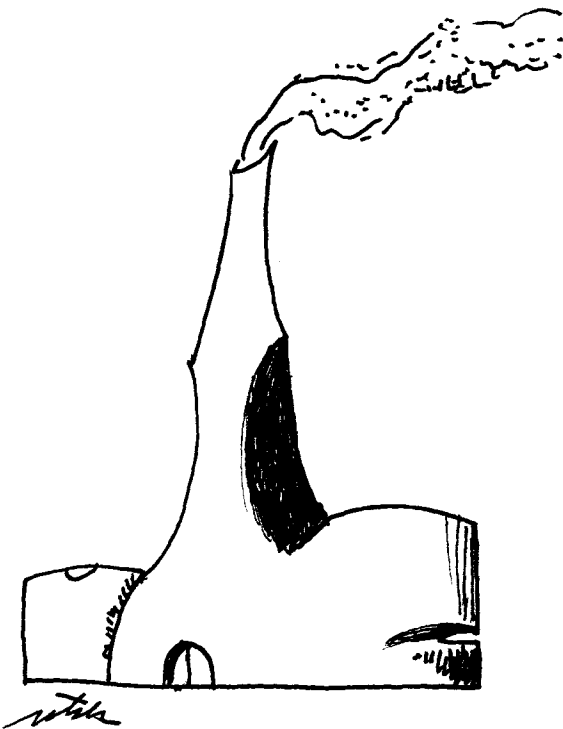
One of the last things I did in the 80s was to finish framing the bathroom walls for the apartment bathroom and wiring up the electrical boxes. The first contractor to come in pulled the boxes off the studs and put up the drywall without them. Go figure. That got ripped out later and the next contractor put up drywall without properly sound insulating the walls so that your business became your neighbor's audio entertainment so my mother-in-law ripped down the walls and then put too much insulation in so that when she put in drywall with the incorrect tools she ended up using more caulk by weight than dry wall for the project. The vanity in that bathroom also disintegrated at some point so when we arrived the shower leaked, there was no light and no sink and this was the "nice" side of the house.

We had five plus days to work on the house and we still couldn't quite get enough done, but it was a start. We cut a hole in the floor of the second floor bathroom and roughed in new plumbing include a new drain line. We also built false walls to add sound insulation and to make room for some of the new plumbing and put in a new window since the old one had been painted shut more than once and had also rotted. We opened up the first floor bathroom in the front apartment to separate it from the kitchen and to add a vanity, fixed up the bathroom mentioned in the previous paragraph, and rewired about half of the areas that were being served by extension cords. We have a lot of work yet to do, but the worst of it has been taken care. We figure another week will get the wiring done and get the walls patched in most of the rooms with at least a primer coat of paint.

One of the problems with the house is that it is located on what has been a relatively busy street corner. There is a fair amount of truck traffic over the years and given the semi-abandoned state of the house the road dirt has been allowed to accumulate. On top of that the walls are lathe and horse-hair plaster. If you've never tried to do any work around this (say rip out part of a wall) you raise a cloud of the nastiest gray dust which gets into everything; especially your nose even with dust masks. The attic was also no picnic with the heat and the grime.

My shoulder held up very well during all this hard work. In fact the only medical problems I've had are dry skin problems as a side effect of being slightly dehydrated for a week and dealing with the grime and plaster. I probably wouldn't have any real problem, but I'm terrible at leaving the peeling skin alone.





On the day we left Pennsylvania we took a slight detour to visit the Pioneer Tunnel anthracite coal mine tour in Ashland. This is very interesting. The tour begins with a mine car ride into the old mine and then a walking tour showing the timbers, coal veins, and the mechanics of coal mining. The tour makes it clear that given the number of veins and their lengths (as much as 100 miles long) that there is plenty of anthracite coal to be had in the Pennsylvania mountains.

Along the route we drove through what is left of Centralia. If you don't recall your history, Centralia is the town which put a landfill in an old pit mine that hadn't been properly sealed and a fire in the landfill moved into the coal vein in 1961 and has been burning ever since. As soon as you get to Centralia you know something isn't right. The landscape is subtly barren, but the strangest sights are the old-style eastern row houses that have no side windows standing alone on their block. Apparently there are only about a half dozen residents remaining and the reason they won't leave is that in Centralia the mineral rights were owned by the residents and despite many court rulings that they will never get compensated for the lost coal they are still holding out. The area has been condemned and it isn't safe to walk around in portions of the area, but the state is unwilling to suffer the public relations nightmare of forcibly removing these people from their homes. In the next few years this will all become moot as the last resident dies off and the area can be properly stripped so the fire can be put out. Hopefully the coal extracted will cover some of the costs.

After returning from Pennsylvania the next week was our summer camp programs on electrical and computer engineering. What we essentially do is run a week-long program where high school aged students get an introduction to

various engineering areas with lectures, labs, and projects. For years I've coordinated and taught in our electrical engineering module and this past year it was split into separate electrical engineering and computing modules. The biggest problem with these programs is the continuing attempts to recruit quality faculty to teach in them. The payroll paperwork is also a pain since no one seems to know who has to sign for the pay to be disbursed. Last year was so bad the pay didn't show until the fourth paycheck after the program. This year may be just as bad since no one seems to know if my memo has gotten all the proper signatures and made it to the appropriate office.

Due to the splitting in the program we shifted around the rooms and I ended up teaching the first day in the lab that is about 62 degrees year round. By midday my voice was going and by the end of the day (seven hours of teaching) I was into full-blown laryngitis. Fortunately I had the second day off and croaked my way through the third and fifth days. I suppose it could have been worse and it could have been coupled with a sore throat. Things were better a few days after the program so no harm done.

One of the side issues of our trip was some problems with the car. It started out subtly. The transmission would shift gears with a slight hesitation. The last time this happened was 75,000 miles ago when GM replaced the transmission under warranty. This time it got worse. The shifts got harder and harder until at times the car bucked severely and nearly stalled out. This was accompanied by the "Check Engine" light which indicated a non-emergency issue by being solidly lit. (Flashing is an emergency issue requiring immediate attention.) The odd thing was if we stopped the car, checked the transmission fluid, and turned the car off it got rid of the problem. Just turning off the car didn't solve the problem. As you might expect after we got home we had the engine codes checked and as expected we got a rebuilt transmission last week. Major ouch at well into four figures. So much for any extra pay due to the summer camp program.

Oh, the back cover entreaty/check line for everyone to send me articles is working so well I'm going to make it permanent to remind everyone how this is supposed to be a community. In my opinion, one of the more distasteful tasks of a fanzine editor is to be trollish and pester people for contributions. It took me a while, but the art eventually became self-sustaining, but not the textual content. On a whim in April I put the checkline on the back page and it has worked better than I could ever expect. Will it become sustaining? I hope so, but that is up to the rest of you. All I really need are four or five of you each issue to send me something. Given that I already have one regular, my mother, how hard can this be from the other seventy odd of you?

Until next issue...

# Reflection On ...Reflection On

by Rodney Leighton

In spite of a variety of derogatory comments and accusations and complaints from the team of Lane and Lillian, Henry wishes me to continue this column. At least one reader does as well. There are problems with doing so. One being that I am tired...tired of people making disparaging remarks who never make any attempt to show they can do better or even as well; tired of reading inane comments about what I write; tired of writing, period. And, as I mentioned to the gentleman who advised me to continue writing this column, there is the problem of material. I now receive very few fanzines directly; I have written about all of them. Nothing has really changed except in the case of *FOSFAX*. I have a much more negative opinion of *The Zine Dump* than I did when I wrote about that but that is due to a reaction to the negative, inane comments Lillian has been making about my efforts. The column which appeared in *TKK* 105 was written over a year before it appeared; *TZD* 6 is not much different than the first couple. Everything else I see is much the same as when I wrote about them; well, *Alexiad* has deteriorated in the eyes of some because it now carries some of my writing.

The objective has always been to alert people to fanzines they might like which they may not see. Well, I did a few of these columns for other reasons. Once in a while I receive some second-hand fanzines. Sometimes I was stirred to write about them; some columns on second-hand fanzines have appeared. Not too many appear any longer. An issue of *Nice Distinctions* appeared recently; I enjoyed reading it. Couldn't think of anything to say about it if asked.

However ... I have, of late, received some fanzines which Nicki Lynch and some others may not consider worthy of the title. Are there any *TKK* readers who would find these three fanzines of interest? Who knows? This is possibly my last day off for months; I am not too pissed off at anyone or anything at the moment, so I will tell you about these three fanzines before I ship them off to someone.

*Weirdness Before Midnight* might actually appeal to Arthur, come to think of it. There is a fairly long (8 pages) autobiographical description of the events of a day and a bit in the life of the publisher Dave Szurek after he had swallowed a bunch of hashish which was supposedly poisoned. Tale reads something like a grade B horror flick, which is a large interest of Dave's. Issue #3 has about nine pages of reviews of the things. This is a very basic zine. Collage cover, some clip art and lots of words; created with a typewriter, believe it or not. Dave floats about various fandoms. I see his name here and there. The zine has some sf fanzine aspects. Starts off with a two page editorial; goes to a few letters of comment, none from anyone I've ever heard of. However, in the LAHF list, there are about 11 names I am familiar with to various degrees, including two or three *TKK* readers. Pages 8 to 13

review horror films; a 2+ page review of a listing of the best 101 horror films; reviews of some drug oriented films; an essay about being in an earthquake; and some bits and pieces of internet chatter posted mostly by Dave Szurek. Szurek on Szurek is quite interesting, here's a partial quote "...EVERY-ONE is made up of at least 60% bullshit". There is a five page article from 1996 about "The Weight" which is a famous song...I pulled into Nazareth... Some UFO stuff; some spiritual stuff and a page of political ranting. Dave really dislikes people like me who do not vote and is annoyed by folks who describe themselves as "apolitical". Interestingly, although he warns folks of this being an issue with political content, in the LOC section, the final page essay is really all the political stuff. 42 page zine, interesting. Very basic; I like and enjoyed it. I don't know how often it is published; cover says "Sometime in 2004" My copy appeared in June. Dave says "Not only do I prefer snail mail, but sometimes I am offline and may not receive email for a month"; dszurek@iopener.net if you want to risk it; 505 North F #829; Aberdeen, WA 98520-2601. Available for \$2.50, trade, or substantial LOC.

One of the names in the LOC section of the above zine is Steve Marlow who publishes once in a long while a zine entitled *Psychlone*. Issue #10 arrived at the end of May. I believe #9 was about a year and a half earlier. This one does have some politics. Steve doesn't think much of Bush and his gang. There is a letter from Margaret Atwood which appeared in *The Globe and Mail* in March 2003 in which she wonders what America is and is becoming. There is not much SF-type stuff herein. On the other hand he does review a few SF films and the title of the zine comes from a novel by Greg Bear, whom he describes as one of his favorite author's fairly obscure novels. Joe Major probably knows what the title is and what it is about. Me, I know that Bear writes SF. The issues starts with an editorial and Steve says he's super into computer usage and then proceeds to list four of his websites. Here is his homepage, whatever that is: [www.geocities.com/marlsj/](http://www.geocities.com/marlsj/) One of the primary aspects of this zine is pro wrestling; since there are not wrestling fans reading this, as far as I know, I will just mention that this is only a portion of the 28 page zine. The special section is entitled "Bus Stories" and is stories of events experienced by Steve and a few other folks while riding a bus. Pure SF fanzine material, no? Some were interesting and couple were sad. Essay on *There Might be Giants*. Reviews of the defunct *Leighton Look*, *Weirdness Before Midnight* #2, and six other zines. Review of half a dozen wrestling related books and I would agree with his reviews of the three I've read and reviews of eight movies including *Star Trek: Nemesis* which was described as "Icky" and *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* which was highly recommended. I haven't seen any of the movies myself. Reviews of 21 musi-

See Reflection on page 12

# Sue's Sites: Oregon

by Sue Welch

"Hey Steve, when does it get warm and sunny here as in summer?" I inquired while standing on the deck of our rented house on the beach in Lincoln City, Oregon, August first. Wrapping my fleece jacket around as much of my body as possible to insulate it from the chill of the wind emanating from the ocean, I remembered the intense heat from the night before.

"This is summer, as warm and sunny as it gets on the Oregon coast; in fact today would be considered a perfect day," was Steve's reply.

"Does anyone ever actually take off their clothes, put on a bathing suit and touch the water?" I added thinking of the beaches 1500 miles to the south in LA, crowded with swimmers year round.

"Once in a while," came the reply.

My cousins had gathered together in Salem for the wedding of Jessie and Ryan. We enjoy each other's company and look for occasions to celebrate so that we can be together. This wedding had been an awesome affair, held outside at the Oregon Gardens. The bride floated down steps, flanked by arrays of magnificent garden flowers. Following the ceremony trams wound guests and their champagne around the Gardens. Dinner of delicious fresh Oregon food included fruits, vegetables, lamb and salmon. Dancing completed the evening. It had been hot there, in fact very hot.

My organized cousin Linda decided to extend our visit a few days by renting a house at the beach. Here we could continue talking and eating, our major activities. We also found time to stroll the beach and visit a few book and antique stores. The coast is well known for its quilt shops that we, quilters, could not ignore.

Oregon, our 33<sup>rd</sup> state, was admitted to the Union in 1859. Synonyms suggest rain, Louis and Clark, the Columbia River, Douglas fir trees and fertile farmland. Nicknamed the Beaver State, Oregon got its name from the Indian word for its mighty river (Columbia), Ouragan. No, it's not always raining in Oregon. In fact, some parts of Oregon hardly ever have cloud cover. Oregon has a most diverse landscape, including desert, coast, valleys and mountains. There are seven distinct regions: the Coast, Portland, Mt. Hood/Columbia River Gorge, the Willamette Valley, Southern Oregon, Central Oregon, and Eastern Oregon. The best known is the 400 mile coastline. Year round mild temperatures and dramatic scenery make this the state's most popular vacation area. In contrast, Eastern Oregon, the half of the state east of the Cascade Mountain Range, is a hot, cloudless, high desert region. The 11,239' Mt. Hood area overlooks the Columbia River



Gorge and is known for its waterfalls and ski areas. In the south Crater Lake National Park is the centerpiece of a natural area known for whitewater rapids, fishing and home to the largest U.S. population of bald eagles outside of Alaska

Claimed by the Spaniards in the early 1500's, Oregon has also been claimed by the English and Russians. White settlement began in 1811 when John Jacob Astor founded his fur trading post near the mouth of the Columbia. In 1843 overland migration via the Oregon Trail began as hundreds of would be farmers descended upon the rich Willamette Valley. Today migration comes from California.



# Idle Thoughts 1

by Terry Jeeves

Sometimes I sits and thinks otherwise I think a bit more. this hectic activity lets things pop in and out of my noddle without any theme to guide them. The other day I heard someone say that they “liked to go out and eat Chinese”. Naturally, I wondered if the person might be a cannibal. No doubt about it, we sometimes use words in strange ways. Imagine some suspected criminal undergoing a hefty grilling., more cannibalism? This is usually termed, “helping police with their enquiries.” Likewise such interrogation might be referred to as “Getting a roasting”. Then of course, one can no longer refer to a friend as a ‘gay’ person or as being ‘a bit queer’, without being misunderstood.

The PC thumpers look askance at Anna Sewell’s *Black Beauty* until they find it to be about a horse. Enid Blyton’s *Noddy* has been censored by a zealous librarian and stranger still, whilst gutter language is given free rein on TV, “It’s how people talk these days”. An almighty howl goes up if someone gets called a ‘wog’ despite this originally being an acronym for ‘wily oriental gentleman’ – now if it meant a wily Eastern person, would there be objections to ‘wep’? Ah, such is progress to enlightenment.

On a totally different tack, how about those twits in TV shows who swap houses to give each other carte blanche to desecrate one of their rooms. Does their desire to be seen on the telly outweigh their common sense? Strangely, the female half of each couple usually develops instant religion on seeing the mayhem wrought on their home by ejaculating “My God” or “My Gawd” How nice it must be to own a personal deity.

On another program, I watched in awe an intrepid dispenser of ‘aromatherapy’ or some such modernity (You are what you pong) as she struggled to convert three packing crates into a desirable modern home. She was aided (hindered?) by the incredible advice of a ‘Feng Shui’ expert who insisted on where to place bathroom, kitchen, loo and bed-pointing directions in order to achieve the best possible energy flows. Then there was the titled lady who bunged crystals in every nook and cranny, including the stable of a racehorse with a broken leg, in order to let their energy flows do all sorts of unspecified good. Ah there are mysteries man should not tamper with. I bet she never asked the horse to sign a medical release form.

Whackiness is everywhere. What idiot will ring a special phone number and pay 1.00 a minute for ten minutes or so, simply for a horoscope? I’m generous; I’ll cast one for half that price. I’d love to see half a dozen of these horoscope casters all cast horoscopes for an undisclosed notable’s birth-date, then see how they compared.

Still on TV, does anyone know why disaster and medical themes predominate? Every channel has programs wallow-

ing in such blood and guts programming. Tomorrow’s World regularly devotes 10 minutes of each half hour to brain damage, operations or illness. Drama series agonise in hospitals, London gets burned down every week and each soap installment invariably ends with some sort of angst. Just for the hell of it, I went through the Radio Times, our local ‘what’s on’ paper, checking medical slots. I came up with TWO pages of medical slanted programmes, pseudo documentaries and their ilk. I once wrote to the BBC and suggested several new programs on these lines, ‘Ready, Steady, Operate would involve three teams composed of one surgeon and one family couple performing some intricate operation against the clock, with bonus points for those spilling the most blood. I also proposed ‘Who Lit It?’ In this hilarious detective game, ten people creep into a deserted house. One player sets it alight and all retreat. An audience panel must work out who did the deed. Winner gets a year’s supply of matches You get the idea. Lunatics are everywhere, if you can’t lick ‘em, join ‘em.

Then there are corn circles; those weird discs, triangles and other symbols flattened in fields of growing crops. I’ve seen umpteen ‘explanations’ of what caused them, all ignoring the obvious (and even admitted) one that hoaxers simply trampled down the plants. Despite this, so-called experts have postulated ‘circular miniature whirlwinds.. Just what sort of obliging whirlwind appears in one spot, stays there to produce concentric circles or wanders around in neat, straight line and triangles? Then there are the UFO nuts who claim the patterns are the work of UFOs or their inhabitants. What possible reason could aliens find for coming all this way to Earth just to carve out aimless patterns in a field? If they want to communicate, there are more direct ways and if they want to remain anonymous, why draw attention to their activities?

The trouble is, some people are always ready to accept crackpot ideas before the obvious one. Many punters buy copper bracelets because they are advertised as, “said to prevent rheumatism”, or “many believe that...”

Note that the vendors don’t claim their wares actually do anything, only that “some people” might think they do. I fancy that those who claim cures get them from the psychosomatic action of their strong belief in such aid. In this connection, one should not forget the man who wrote to the Prime Minister to explain that the NHS could save thousands of pounds on treating arthritis, simply by getting everyone to wear socks with the toe ends cut off. As proof, he offered the fact that he had worn such socks for all his life and had no traces of arthritis.

See Idle continued on page 12



# Attack of the Killer Battery

by Julie Wall

One Friday this past July, after a Tour de France simulation in spin class at the gym, I go out to my car all hot and sweaty. I'm thinking I'll go home and get a shower and maybe go surprise some friends of mine whose belly dance troupe is performing at a local tavern.

I get in the car, turn the key. It makes one of those cranking noises and then dies. Will not start. Doesn't make any sound at all...

So, I call AAA. They ask if I need a jump or a tow. How the hell do I know? I say tow just in case. It's 5:30 and they say they'll have someone there "within the hour." I'm thinking I'll have them tow it to the Saturn place, leave it there and then I'll have to go rent a car...

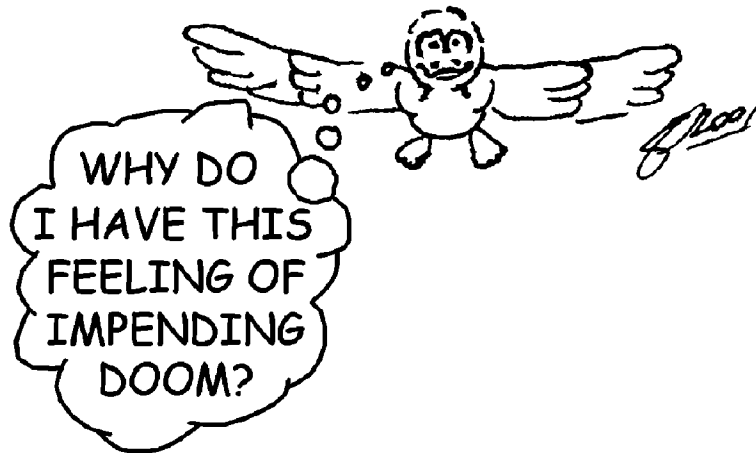
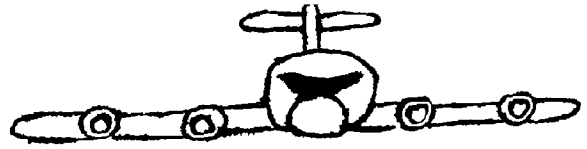
So I go back in the gym and use their phone book because there is air conditioning in there and I look to see if there is anywhere near the Saturn dealership where I can rent a car instead of having to go to the frigging airport, which is far away from Saturn. Low and behold, Enterprise has an office in Crown Automotive, which is right next door to the Saturn place because Crown owns the Saturn franchise in Birmingham. I call and I get a recording (at 5:30) which says, "Our hours are from 7AM to 6PM Monday-Friday. Please leave a message and we'll call you back."

I left a message but they never called me back – they went home early! I go back out to the car to wait on the tow truck and call my brother who works in Birmingham, but he doesn't answer his cell. I leave a message asking him to call me then I call my friend David as a backup saying, "Can you meet me at the Saturn place and take me to the airport to rent a car?"

He's a good friend (and luckily not busy) so he says sure.

6:30 comes and no tow truck. I call AAA back, they say, oh, the guy tried to call you (did not, I have call waiting on my cell!), they are very busy and he's running late, will be there by 6:55.

So I wait. My brother calls. He's already at home in Nectar, AL, so he's not really in a place to help physically. But he knows much more about cars than I do, so he asks me questions. He says this kind of hot weather is hell on batteries. (It's hell on me too, I'm sweating as much now as I was in spin class.) He tells me to turn on the headlights and go look. Ah ha, the headlights do not come on. He says, (duh) "It's your battery."



I wait some more. I know I bought a battery with a warranty at Auto Zone some time back... I dig through all the car receipts in my glove compartment. Voila! June of 2000. 7 year warranty – replaced in the first two years for free, after that pro-rated. I do the math and figure I can get a new battery for about \$30 if I go back to AutoZone. I get out the small Yellow Pages that I keep in the car. The closest Auto Zone is on Green Springs. Not close. Argh. But I call them and this guy answers with this long spiel and I don't really understand what he said, but I ask, "How late are you open?" He says 24-hours.

I find this amazing, but wonderful. I call David back and say, "Change of plans. I think it's my battery. I'm going to have the tow truck guy jump me off and you meet me at the Auto Zone at the corner of Green Springs and Valley Ave."

While I'm talking to David, the call waiting beeps so when I get off with him, I see that AAA has called again. It's 6:50 and **still not tow truck**. I call them back. They say, "Well he's right there in the area, he's looking for you."

I don't know where he was looking. SportPlex isn't that hard to find, but about 10 minutes later he finally shows up. I ask him if he can try to jump start the car before we tow, he says sure and maneuvers the huge flat bed tow truck so he can. The car starts right up!

He warns me not to turn the car off before I get home. I say I'm going to Auto Zone.

So I'm carefully driving half-way across town. And I'm getting kind of worried that it's not *just* the battery. Because

whenever I change gears (i.e. the car is in neutral), the speedometer and the tachometer swing wildly to a fro and all the dashboard lights flash on and off at random. This seems odd to me because I thought that once you start the engine the battery isn't needed anymore?

And I also start worrying that I maybe dialed the wrong number for Auto Zone somehow. I am paranoid this way...so I call 411 on the cell and have them dial Auto Zone for me and there's no answer!

I get to the corner of Green Springs and Valley Ave. and I see no Auto Zone. Great, I think, they've closed this one. I go a little further past the intersection and pull into a strip mall where I carefully stop the car, but not the engine. There is an O'Reilly's Auto Parts store in the strip mall. I think, "**Argh!** They replaced the Auto Zone or something." I call David, who is almost there and tell him about the lack of Auto Zone and where I am. While I'm talking, the engine dies...

David gets there. We call Wal-Mart thinking that maybe they can test the battery but the closest one has not auto center??? and the others close at 8 (it's 7:30 now) and have stopped taking tickets.

I tell him about the weirdness changing gears and he agrees that it's odd. Maybe the alternator is also bad? We are thinking maybe the car really **does** need to go to Saturn. So, we will jump the car off and he will follow me to Saturn. I look for my jumper cables because he has none...and apparently neither do I! I haven't needed any in a long time and they just aren't there. I blame my ex. He probably stole them.

But, there is the O'Reilly's right there and it's open. So we'll go buy some damn jumper cables. There is a sign on the door as we go in, though, that says, "Free Testing – Batteries and Alternators."

I explain my predicament to the nice young man who takes a little tricorder-looking machine out to my car and tests my battery. The results are somewhat vague, but eventually it says my battery is bad. He says he can sell me a new battery. I say, "Well, I have a warranty on this one from Auto Zone." He says, "Well, you should take it down to Auto Zone then." I say, "They're closed." He looks at me funny. "I don't think so. Not with us open." I say "Where is it?" He points, "Right down there, in front of the thrift store."

Oh.

So we go buy some jumper cables from the nice young man. We jump start my car. David follows me down the hill where **I still don't see any Auto Zone**. Luckily, David doesn't have Auto Zone blindness like me, though, so he takes the lead. He in fact, probably would have seen it before if I hadn't been on the phone telling him it wasn't there. It's lit up with neon as big as life and man is it hopping! In my defense, it is up on a hill and not **strictly** on the corner, but I digress...

We park and leave my engine running and - here's the info critical to the next bit of the saga - I carefully get my emergency backup key out of my purse, put it in my shorts pocket and lock the car doors. It is Green Springs Ave., after all, not the savoriest part of town and I don't want someone driving off with my car, even though it is causing me trouble at the moment. The emergency key is one that came with the car long ago that is in a little black vinyl pouch the size of a business card that says Saturn on it and just has the long key part of a key stuck in it.

The parts counter is like the bank on Friday afternoon. There is a **huge** line of people waiting. So we join in and wait. We chat. We wait. Finally, we get up there and I brandish my warranty and the man, Sancho, says, "We need to test the battery." I say fine. He gets one of these cart rigs they have (fancier than O'Reilly's) and starts following us out the door. At the door, we pause for a second because it has started sprinkling. Right behind him is Demetrius, with another of the carts, who turns out to be the hardest working Auto Zoner (that's really what they call them). Sancho says, "Oh we can't take this out if it's raining." David protests, "It's just drizzling." Sancho demurs. Demetrius says, "Come on, I'll get you after these people." Sancho berates him to cover up the cart. Sancho has a pretty thick Mexican accent, so David thinks Demetrius hasn't understood him, so David says, "He wants you to put something over it." Demetrius says, "A little water ain't gonna hurt it."

So we go stand in front of my car (whose engine has died again) in the tiny sprinkling which soon stopped and wait for Demetrius to come over. He does and he's muttering, "Worthless Mexican. He just didn't want to come out here. And he a manager."

He hooks up the cart. After a few minutes, it comes back and says, "Recharge and retest."

Well, Auto Zone may be open 24 hours, but we don't want to spend the night. We explain to Demetrius our fear that it might not just be the battery. To test the alternator though, we have to have a good, charged battery. He says, "Well, if you want I can say it tested bad and we'll give you a new battery. But don't tell **them** I said that." He got no argument from us.

Back inside, we have to wait in line again. I get my emergency key out of my pocket and start fiddling with it nervously. It's 8:35. I am tired and hungry and sticky and sweaty and I feel bad for dragging David through all of this. We get up to the counter and a third Auto Zoner, Darren, looks up my warranty and says a new one with the core charge and all will be \$39 - whatever, batteries have gone up - I sign the paper (where I notice that Darren has signed where it says Auto Zoner). Darren carries my battery over to **the** cash register. Yes, Auto Zone is the happeningest place in B'ham at nearly 9PM on Friday night but there's only one cash register open. Luckily **most** of the people in the store are still at the parts counter, so we don't wait too long. I pay for the battery.

The battery is heavy, so for effect, I carry it back to Darren saying, "Is someone going to put it in for me?" They advertise that at Auto Zone, so it's not like I was just pulling the helpless female routine. Darren grabs it and says, "As soon as we find the tool box."

David and I wander outside for a minute and I see Demetrius down at the end of the building working on another car. I go down there and he's got a toolbox. I say, "Oh, you found the toolbox." He says, "This is mine. I don't what they did with theirs."

We go back inside and I stand in the way with my arms crossed like a bitch. Well, sometimes you gotta. Darren finally looks up and sees me and comes out from behind the counter and goes outside, hollering for Demetrius. I guess Demetrius agrees to put my battery in with his tools. At this point David sees a sign on the door advertising replacement keyless remotes. He's been needing one for his car for a while, so he goes back in to check that out and I go back to my car with Darren carrying my battery. I feel in my pocket for the emergency key.

It's not there. A cursory grope in my purse in the dark reveals nothing. David comes out to the car and Demetrius comes over to put the battery in. I say, "I can't find the key."

In the first and really only sign of breaking all night, since he's such a good sport, David's voice cracks a little when he says, "You lost the key???"

I say I'm going inside where there's light and I do. I dump my purse out twice, looking in all the pockets of it and my wallet and my day timer, etc. Nothing. I go look at the cash register and the parts counter and ask the guys there. Nothing. David comes back in, the battery having been installed. He gives me the good news that as soon as the new battery was in, all the lights on the dashboard came on (since the real key was still in the ignition). We dump my purse out a third time to no avail. We look every place we can in the Auto Zone. David remembers seeing me playing with it in line at the parts counter.

Now, I know I have a spare car key at home, but my house is all the way across town. I don't want to make David drive me there and back again. My friend Charlotte, who lives very near to me also has a spare key to my car. It's 9 PM. I call her house, hoping she hasn't made an early night of it. Her husband Jerry answers the phone. From the bath tub. Not only is Charlotte not in the bed, she's not even in Birmingham, having gone up to Nashville to see her step mother. Not to worry, I think, because Charlotte keeps all the sets of people's spare keys on a key rack in her kitchen – I am not the only one to leave emergency keys with Charlotte. But Jerry doesn't know which ones are mine and he's in the tub besides. I tell him I will call him back.

We search some more. I agonize over what to do. David says, "What if he meets us half way?" I call Jerry, now out of the

tub, and he agrees to bring **all** the keys to a rendezvous in front of the Civic Center.

We tell the Auto Zoners (not a little bemused by this whole episode) that we are going to get another key. We jump in David's car and get on the interstate. At 8th Ave, they had closed down the right two lanes and traffic was at a standstill. We get off and go through South side and downtown. We circle the Civic Center once, and just as we are about to start another go round, I see Jerry's red truck coming at us. David pulls over and I jump out and flag down Jerry, who stops in the middle of the street. He rolls down his window and hands me a plastic grocery bag full of keys. I start sorting through them furiously. David calls out from his car, "It looks like you're doing a drug deal!" Well, a blonde jumping out of a sports car to flag down another man doesn't look good anyway.

### **My key is not there.**

I apologize profusely to Jerry for having dragged him out, too. He is also a good sport and seems more amused than anything else. Indeed, I got a call from Charlotte the next morning because Jerry had called her in Nashville to tell her the funny story. That's when she told me that my key was with her in Nashville. It seems that in this day of cell phones, when people can reach her in her car, it doesn't do her any good to have the more salient spare keys sitting at home, so they stay in her car.

Anyway, David and I drive to my house. I ask him if he wants to go get something to eat if this ordeal ever ends. He says yes, and comes inside to use the facilities while I swab off and change clothes.

Back across town at the still hopping Auto Zone, we arrive at about 10 PM, open up my car and it cranks right up. Inside, still no sign of my key. It **has** to be there, though. Darren says for me to call in a few days, maybe they will find it. I ask him if we still need to test the alternator, since the new battery seems to have done the trick. He asks if the battery light is on after I start the engine. I don't know. He says if it's not then there's no problem with the alternator.

We go back outside and no battery light! Hallelujah!

We drive separately to The Cheesecake Factory, which is open until 12:30 AM (!!!). On the way, there is no weirdness with the meters or dashboard lights. There's no wait at the restaurant at 10:30 PM - the only time I have ever been there when this was true - and we stuff ourselves with avocado egg-rolls, sweet corn tamales and crabcakes. I had some wine.

The end.

PS – My car started fine the next day, too; but I still haven't found the key.

### Reflection continued from page 6

cal releases. For a \$1 or trade how can you go wrong?  
733 Gleneagles Dr.; Kamloops, BC V2E 1J7; Canada;  
marlsj123@yahoo.com.

*The Die* is a very literary zine. The publisher Joe Smith changes the format every issue. Spring 2004 is newsprint legal-sized. The editorial is about solitude in the electronic age. Oops, someone should chide me for that. The opening essay is about the fate of solitude in an electronic age. Some political stuff. Joe is one of the multitude of small press folk who dislike the Bush gang. The center piece is an essay of reflections on five books he has read including *From Shakespeare to Existentialism and Letters to a Young Poet*. A bunch of zine reviews and magazine reviews and finally a letters section. In my zine like thing I describe this a being "close to an SF zine". Copies are free although donations of cash or stamps are encouraged and appreciated. I believe a letter will get you a sample copy. Red Roach Press; PO Box 764; College Park, MD 20740; redroachpress@yahoo.com.

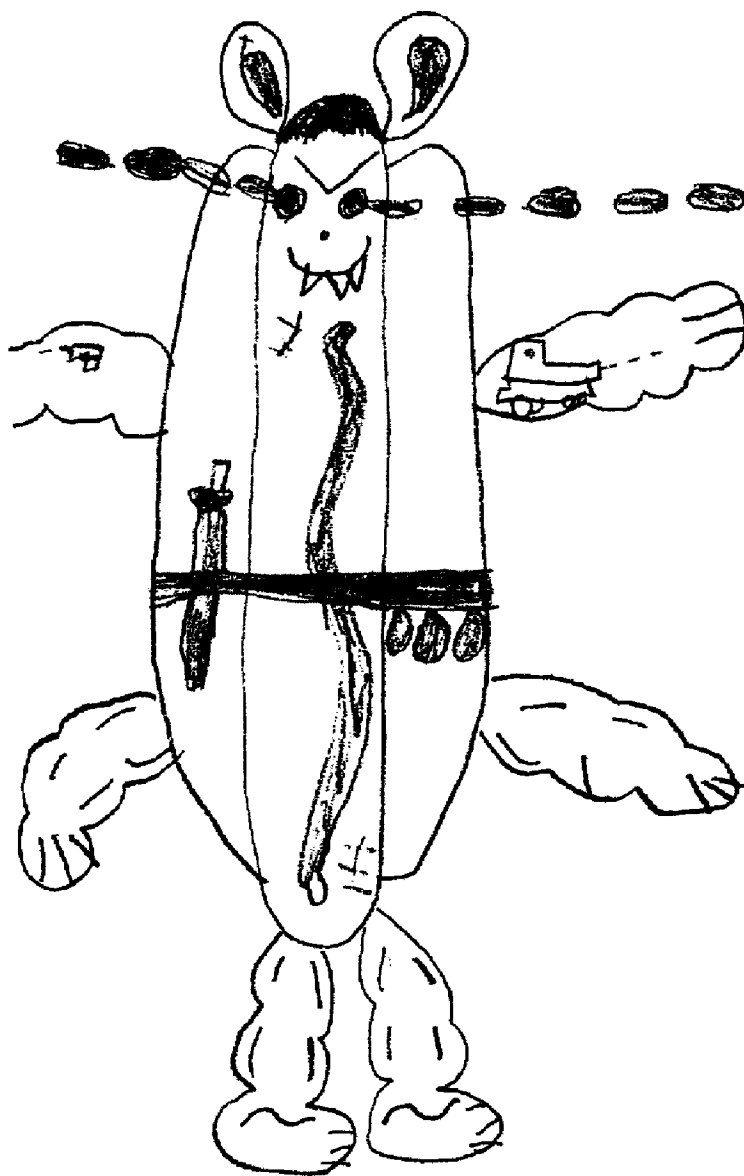
Will there be any more columns from me? Dunno. I toyed with this one for weeks and did not really want to do it, but felt that possibly at least one reader would send for a copy of each of these fanzine and, if so, I would be doing a favor to the publishers. Will I receive any fanzines which I haven't already written about? Who knows? Even if I do, will I have the time and energy to write a column? Don't know that either.

### Idle continued from page 8

I sometimes wonder if the panic over the radiation from mobile phones is in the same category. All I can say is that I worked (and often slept) in a transmitting station operating eight 1.5Kw transmitters round the clock. As far as I know, I suffered no ill effects.

Returning to TV and what constitutes entertainment these days, I offer two clippings from the Radio Times. The tagline for *The Sopranos* says, Christopher's life hangs in the balance, Carmela confronts Tony about his infidelity and Dr.Melfi reveals her problems with substance abuse. Contains strong language and violence. How jolly!

Then picking that show as the week's Choice, we are told.. One of the best episodes so far, this brings up the roles of morality and religion in the lives of the mobsters. The catalyst is Christopher's brush with the grim reaper which gets these 'soldiers' thinking about Hell. Paulie Walnuts feels the money he's paid to the church should have protected him from such a fate, while Pussy is feeling guilty as Hell. The double standard is maintained when one minute Tony acts like the best father on Earth and the next becomes a murdering monster who takes



mutant  
hot dog attack

too much pleasure in wiping out his victim. Superb but scary.

No, I didn't watch it to find out how much worse things got, but I still wonder what sort of society we're in which looks on such activities as 'entertainment'. Maybe there's a parallel with decadent Rome gloating over beer and circuses, or am I reading too much into things?

# INTERLOCUTIONS

Joseph T Major  
1409 Christy Avenue  
Louisville, KY 40204-2040  
jtmajor@iglou.com  
July 7, 2004

And now the knews ... So the Welches are killing themselves by degrees.

Baggage inspections: Just remember the time Groucho Marx decided to practice some Marxism on the U.S. Customs Service and put down his occupation as "Smuggler". Strip searches weren't the half of it!

Oh yes, I have relatives in Salt Lake City, too, so a trip there would produce an even longer such list of who we saw and where.

I see that **Scott Patri** has come roaring back into the field. Will there be another *Zero-G Lavatory* anytime soon? I have the text of the zero-g lavatory instructions from 2001.

*Colonial House*: I saw part of that. Recreation shows are usually interesting and a cut above the usual *Survivor* clone. Personal note: many years ago the family went to Maine to see my father's sister. We visited the Knox house, home of bookseller General Henry Knox. I remember thinking how *isolated* it would be in winter. Looks like the colonists of Colonial House had like thoughts.

Personal note on the personal note: When we went to see my aunt and her daughters, my father had just turned fifty. We will be seeing the daughters before Worldcon, my first time seeing them since then. This Christmas Eve, I will turn fifty.

"The Sydrian Perspective": Regarding the Jack Rabbit of Odessa, wasn't it Brian Aldiss who wrote about the Great Bearded Kumquat of Lugash?

Hugos as Usual: Gawrsh, **Milt** and I agree on the top novel, and pretty much on the rankings. I had *Blind Lake* last and *Ilium* next to last, whereas he had them the other way around. And we agree on *Singularity Sky*. I will look out for Stross's next novel.

InterLOCutions: **Trinlay Khadro**: Using Microsoft Streets & Trips Bill Gates is GOD! I find that a drive from our house to the Welches's is 419.9 miles and will take six hours and forty-four minutes. If only Ditto weren't right in the month of home insurance payment season.

**Kate Yule**: I prefer "186,282 Miles per Second It's Not Just a Good Idea, It's the Law". Me: And today is the day for the B-12 shot. I don't want to die like Admiral Peary.

WP10 doesn't have that Ghostscript tack-on for its .pdf files. (*Alexiad* is available over the net as a .pdf file. Send requests to the above email address. Advt.)

**E. B. Frohvet**: All my credit cards are, or could be, platinum. I even got an invite once for an American Express Platinum Card, and I don't charge anywhere near the \$10,000 a year they seem to require. (But now they have an American Express Black Card, complete with a very thorough concierge service, though whether they can say "We Also Walk Dogs" is not something I know.) It's probably the credit rating matter. Are you still keeping track of the credit card solicitations?

Wasn't it that the clerks in *Lest Darkness Fall* managed to enter their embezzlements? Padway, unlike Doc MacRae in *Red Planet*, doesn't seem to realize that "Every law that was ever written opened up a new way to graft." (*Red Planet*, p. 49) and the same goes for accounting systems.

**Rodney Leighton & Lloyd Penney**: So that's what happened to the **Penney** loc.



When I took the bus to work I had about an hour total (half and half morning and afternoon) to read. Now of course I walk.

**Bill Legate:** “Black hole” in Russian is a very vulgar slang term. Russian astronomers have that problem discussing singularities.

**Milt Stevens:** There was an Ogden Nash poem about his favorite English mystery writer and the constant retitlings of her books. Cliff Amos (who was president of FOSFA when I joined, and such is the way of the world that his current Significant Other is a member of Lisa’s church) once warned a man that the three Agatha Christie novels he was buying were all the same one.

**Scott Patri:** And really really I meant to buy a can of Bosco chocolate syrup so I could send you a picture of Joe and Bosco, the Beanie Brothers for real. Well, sort of.

**Brad W. Foster:** But the people stealing wireless internet are downloading the really hot stuff. They don’t show the cute redhead and the three sheepdogs in the email ...

WAHF: In a wargame I heard of once there was a mad monarch who said about a garrison of rebels: “Decimate them! Spare every tenth man!”

Namarie,  
Joseph T Major

□**TKK:** *Ghostscript is not a tack-on; it is simply a printer driver that creates a pdf file rather than actually generating a physical copy. It will work with just about any program that can print. The annoying part is the last page with the two or three line advertising blurb about what program created the file. I stopped tracking credit card submissions, it ceased being interesting any more.*□

Ned Brooks  
4817 Dean Ln  
Lilburn, GA 30047-4720  
nedbrooks@sprynet.com  
07 Jul 2004

Hi Knarl - Thanks for the zine. Strange cover! Glad to hear you found funding for your law career but isn’t this one of those subsidies for a surplus commodity, like the tax deduction for kids? Has there ever been a shortage of lawyers? Even Shakespeare seemed to see a surplus....

So there went **Rodney Leighton** – obviously not a “death will not release you” trufan.... I remember when he first appeared on the fannish event horizon, but not where – somehow it’s associated in my leaky brainpan with the reprint of “Blood-Sucking Monkeys of North Tonawanda”.

I see that your typesetter, whatever it is, has forgotten how to make an apostrophe so that we get “weren t”, “dubya s”, “we re” and so on. Weird. My PC forgot my dial-up password,

perhaps because of a glitch in a Turbobasic program that generates Goldbach’s Comet. Perhaps, in homage to Lord Timothy Dexter, you could put a few lines of them in the next issue so that the readers “may peper and solt it as thay plese”.

As for some years now I did not try to vote for the Hugos - in general I have not read the candidates. And even if I had I doubt I could say which was “best”. Perhaps I should try the Dorothy Parker method – the one hurled the furthest in disgust would be the worst, and I could count back from there. Alas, the house isn’t large enough for a fair trial – maybe when I get old and weak.

**Gene Stewart** is right about the glorification of Reagan being a deliberate exercise in revisionism. Soon I suppose it will be a violation of “national security” to question such rubbish – the Bushies have already retroactively reclassified material in the open literature.

I have noticed that screw-in fluorescents don’t come on as quick as incandescent bulbs, but I never saw one take more than a couple of seconds, just enough to notice. I have some of the swirly ones and some of the U-tube design. I was glad when they got small enough to fit the old glass hall fixtures here.

I had wondered about the question **Bill Legate** brings up – is there an absolute space relative to rotation? Has it been determined that a body at zero rpm as measured by centrifugal force is also at rest with respect to the fixed stars?

Best,  
Ned

□**TKK:** *Like many things lawerly surplus is a matter of other factors. There is a shortage of good intellectual property attorneys. The economy of surplus may play a role here, but the powers that be have not used that as their reason, but rather denied my proposal on its “merits”.*□

Lisa Major  
1409 Christy Avenue  
Louisville, KY 40204-2040  
08 Jul 2004  
tabor@iglou.com

Dear Knarley

Thank you very much for *The Knarley Knews*.

**Brad Foster:** If it’s any consolation I get a fair amount of spam offering to increase the size of organs I don’t have and don’t really want either. I’m quite happy the way I am.

**Jerry Kaufman:** My fingers are really mad at not being invited to see these Island attractions.

**Trinlay Khadro:** Consider yourself lucky. When she was a kitten, Delenn had a sock fetish and not one of my dozens of

mostly interchangeable cotton socks, oh no. She would not be content with anything less than Joe's pricy black socks.

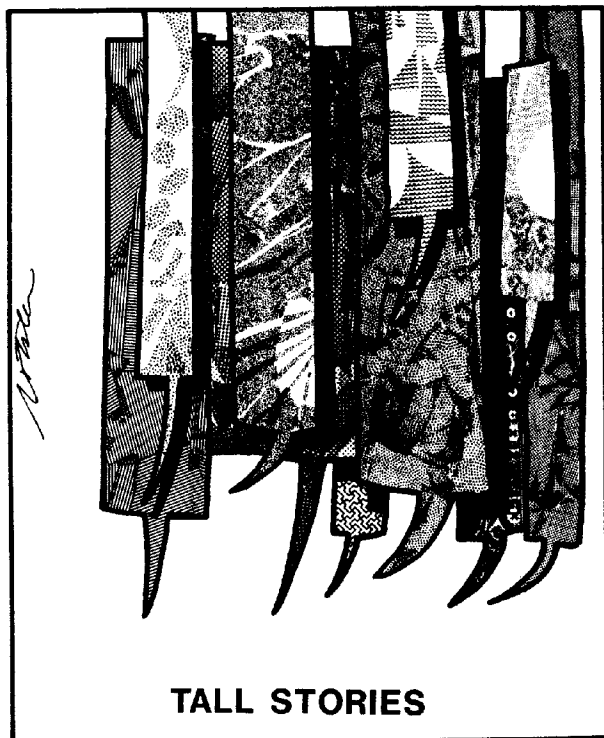
A few days ago I woke up and found myself wondering why my stomach was rumbling so loudly because I wasn't really hungry. When I opened my eyes I found a pile of pale yellow fur right against my ear and Sarang's purr going full blast. (His is loud enough that you can hear it through a closed door.) The prize for being startling in our household, though, goes to Elfling, at that time as dark gray as a cat can get before being called black. He had never gotten in bed with us before this. It was winter and when I opened my eyes at four a.m. all I saw looking back at me were a pair of disembodied, wild-looking eyes. I don't think I've ever gone from very groggy to totally awake any faster unless it was the morning he sank a claw into my chest.

**Frohvet:** I think the record on police should include the rainy night when Joe and I had a flat tire on I-64. A car pulled in behind us and I can still recall the relief I felt when I saw the other vehicle had blue lights on the top. We were very glad to see Trooper Kim Wall of the Indiana State Police that night. Unfortunately, as you say, such things would not be considered newsworthy. Also I remember one hilarious incident at a pizza restaurant. A cop walked in and a little girl promptly started pointing at him and announcing Look! A policeman! The young policeman promptly pointed at her and said. Look! A little girl!

**Lloyd Penney:** Both Joe and myself came home from Toronto and didn't bring SARS with us.

I agree 100 is a nice round number.

Two-port networks? Isn't that where two coastal cities have an exclusive trade relationship?



☐ **TKK:** *The PR problem police have is that you usually you don't interact with them until it is bad news. Whether it is for a traffic stop or something else most of the time the connotations are negative. I can't imagine what it would be like if my primary interaction with my students was just to return graded work.*☐

Dale Speirs  
Box 6830  
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2E7  
Canada  
2004-07-08

TKK #106 received and read. I will not use contractions in this letter, seeing as how your word processor omits all apostrophes.

Re: The *Colonial House* reality show, whereby contestants try to live as our ancestors did in the 1600s. It reminds me of why I moved to the city. As someone who grew up in a rural area, I always chuckle when I hear people talking about giving up the rat race of city life and moving to a farm to enjoy the simple life. Ah yes, the simple joys of plugged septic tanks, snowblocked roads, minimum 45-minute response time by fire, ambulance, or police, milk fever during calving season, the swather throwing a piston rod during the harvest as heavy rain approaches, and feeding the livestock twice a day no matter what else happens or how sick you are.

And let us not forget about the friendly culture of farm folk, such as drunken sons who return from the tavern on the same road you are driving, the difference being that you are sober enough to see past the hood ornament on your vehicle. A simple place where a daughter graduating from high school aspires to nothing more than being a "ring by spring" housewife, and parents pray she will not get knocked up before the wedding. A tolerant folk as long as you agree with the majority and do not to obscene things like voting for the Greens or suggesting that the war in Iraq was not well thought out. A way of life where spousal and child abuse is more common than in the city because there are no social services. I will stick to the good life in the city. Whenever I become nostalgic about the farm, I remind myself of the Christmas morning I got the pickup stuck in the middle of the pasture during a blizzard, had to walk back for the tractor, finish feeding the cattle, take the pickup back to the farmyard, and then walk back for the tractor.

Re: Texas jackrabbits. Calgary has abundant jackrabbits in the city, as they have adapted well to humans, along with coyotes, magpies, ravens, and deer. The Parks Department Naturalist estimates there are 400 coyotes within city limits, which I think is a low estimate.

With regards,  
Dale

☐ **TKK:** *Do you mean to say that farm life isn't like a Green Acres re-run?*☐

E. B. Frohvet  
4716 Dorsey Hall Dr. #506  
Ellicott City, MD 21042  
July 8, 2004

Dear Henry,

The finches are nesting in the overhang above my patio again. I don't bother them, they don't bother me, we all get along.

In further response to **Joseph Major**, who questioned how the survivors in disaster stories were always getting old cars to run, I'd like to cite the case of a 1924 American LaFrance fire truck, which was state-of-the-art when Howard County purchased it that year. After an honorable career in firefighting, some time in the 1940s it was bought by a restaurant owner, who for many years used it as the central decoration in his establishment. (Granted, keeping it indoors was a very large factor in its state of preservation.) Recently it came into the hands of a collector who traced its provenance and offered to sell it back to the county. By all indications no one had attempted to start it for years, possibly decades. Mechanics cleaned the engine, gave it a tuneup, fresh oil and new spark plugs – and it fired right up. I would guess that modern cars, dependent on more complex and fragile technologies (computer chips) wouldn't do as well.

Speaking of technology that works, a round of applause for NASA, which got one right. The Cassini spacecraft exploring Saturn appears to be working like a charm. Curious that we can do that, in the hostile environment of space, and your computer/printer elects not to recognize apostrophes.

If my company offered me early retirement with a reduced pension, keep my medical insurance and credit union membership, I'd take it in a flash. Management doesn't care. Neither do politicians, I don't think one is any better than the next.

I would pose as a trivia question what SF novel has the principals attend a ball game at Dodger Stadium, but it's rather obscure, and very questionably SF even by me elastic standard. Though I'm still fond of the book.

**Rodney**, I forgive you. Clearly you didn't lie deliberately, you just overlooked having read something years ago.

*Colonial House* sounds like fun – if somebody dies it. Not eager to volunteer myself. The house had no fireplace because "the house has no women to cook for it"? Ladies, send those letters of complaint to **Sue**... I can cook passably well and I imagine I could learn to cook in a fireplace/woodstove if needed.

I see rabbits all the time. My father was once stationed at Fort Hood. My impression of west Texas is largely derived from watching the "Sun Bowl" football game on TV: there are hills all around the stadium. The last time I was in Texas it was merely to change planes in Dallas, an achievement in itself, as the airport is very large.

**Trinlay**: I still use my Dark Age tech (answering machine) to screen calls. My cousin, being familiar with this, listens to the message and says, "Hey! Pick up the phone, it's me!" As for the theme music of *Joan of Arcadia*, well, God was one of us – this is the essential premise of Christianity. I lean to the theory that God is speaking to Joan through various extant people, borrowing their voices for the purpose. Discussion?

**Scott Patri**: Apparently you have not considered the possibility that sheep might have just cause to crap all over your company. (Look on the bright side: If the bike ride is uphill to work, it's downhill on the way home.)

Your being the de factor chair of your engineering committee is the price you pay for showing initiative. Once during my time in the service I saw another soldier reprimanded for not having done something. He defended his inaction by saying he had received no orders on the subject. Didn't he have any initiative?, he was asked. "Initiative is for officers," he replied. And that was pretty much the end of the discussion.

Best gremflods,  
E.B. Frohvet

□**TKK**: *You are right. A modern car probably couldn't sit fallow 50□ years and work and there would certainly be no way to tune up its engine electronics. On the other hand the cars are more reliable during their reasonable working life. I can let my car sit for two or more weeks and it will start right up, as early as 10 years ago this wouldn't likely have been the case.*□

Joy V. Smith  
8925 Selph Road  
Lakeland, FL 33810  
pagadan@aol.com  
12 Jul 2004

Dear Knarley,

Congratulations on getting the scholarship! And you sound happy with your loans. You will soon be busy working on your law degree, along with your other projects, travels, etc. And a really big Congrats to your mother on her MBA degree!! The Cal-Poly Pomona campus/horse farm sounds interesting and fun. Do the students get to visit the horses?



## Fantasy Crafts

[www.fantasycrafts.com](http://www.fantasycrafts.com)

---

Visit our online store, and select from a variety of cross stitch charts, quilt patterns, needlepoint canvases, and other craft items with a fantasy or medieval theme.

---

PO Box 174  
Grafton, WI 53024

(262) 375-8792  
[Orders@fantasycrafts.com](mailto:Orders@fantasycrafts.com)



Did you get much time to relax while visiting your mother or were you busy fixing things till you had to rush back home? I think I can imagine the inspectors' reactions to your cordless drill on an x-ray. Look at that!! Btw, do you get lots of frequent flyer miles? And another Happy Birthday to Connor.

I hope your shoulder continues to get better, and I look forward to reports on the progress of the tree house. Re: your jungle. I bet I have more weeds and vines than you do, despite our lack of rain this rainy season. (We keep planting new plants and watering them.)

Thanks to **Sue** for her report on the colony. I thought that sounded like one of the more interesting reality shows. I hadn't realized the group received training before being deposited in the wild, but I can see that it would be a good thing. (I visited Plimoth Plantation years ago when I lived in Boston; I love recreated villages and forts.)

I enjoyed **Milt Steven's** Hugo choices and descriptions. I don't think I've read any of them so I appreciate knowing something about them. (I should save this until they're announced.) I also appreciated **Gene Stewart's** article. (I was amazed when I heard on the TV news that some group wanted something named after Reagan in every county in the U.S. And Mount Rushmore?!!)

Letters: To **Milt Stevens**, I read *Under Pressure* recently in an old paperback, and it mentioned something, as I recall, about Dragon of the Sea. (Drat. Where is it?)

**Scott Patri**, can you help the people who call you with only 12 days training? Did you have much computer background before that? Outsourced to Canada, huh... (I call for help now and then and always get patient, knowledgeable tech support and am really grateful.)

**Eric Lindsay**, I'm impressed with your lighting expertise! (I like regular bulbs because they don't need ballast and some little thingie?)

The missing apostrophes gave me a start now and then. (It's 'cause I'm an English major.)

Interesting cover, but I don't get the Giant (movie) car with solar sail reference. Cute idea in the cartoon, Unicorns love SF (spaceship as horn).

Appreciatively,  
Joy

☐**TKK**: *I always find time to relax even when I'm busy. It contributes to a lowered stress level. I get just enough frequent flyer miles to actually track them. The problem is that I don't often get to concentrate on just one airline. If you are an English Major does that mean you are related to Joseph?*☐

Joseph Nicholas  
15 Jansons Road  
Tottenham  
London N15 4JU  
josephn@globalnet.co.uk  
18 Jul 2004

Dear Henry and Letha

Thanks for the last few issues of *The Knarley Knews*, and apologies for not having responded since issue 101. Too many other things to do, obviously – coupled with spending all of May on holiday in Australia, visiting in-laws and touring the Kimberley region in the north of Western Australia: a region the size of reunited Germany, but with a population of a mere 30,000, half of them indigenous. (As you might expect from its location in the tropics, the Kimberley – actually one of the more hospitable parts of northern Australia – was one of the last places to be settled by Europeans, and aboriginal culture therefore remains strong there – as opposed to southern Australia, where it's vanished entirely and the aborigines still living there are entirely assimilated.) Lots of photographs were taken, many with Judith's new digital camera; any time now, I should be putting up a web page with a selection of them and a narrative of the trip to tie them together. That's "any time now" as in *Real Soon Now*, of course; first I have to assemble the physical album of the trip from the thirty-odd rolls of film I took....

Anyway. **Gene Stewart** refers to the Sovietisation of the public image of the late Ronald Reagan, which will undoubtedly cause the *FOSFAX* crowd (for example) to hop with rage, but is absolutely accurate. Indeed, when I first heard of the organisation campaigning for a monument to Reagan in every county, I was immediately reminded of what we'd seen on our trip to the then Soviet Union in 1989: wherever we went, we found that Lenin had been there before us, even in places which he'd probably never visited while alive.

Nor is this the only example of the manner in which US conservatives' attitudes resemble those of the Stalinists they profess to despise. You will doubtless have heard of Trofim Lysenko, whose attempts to develop a party-endorsed "Soviet Darwinism" held back biology in the USSR for several decades. In a similar way, the religious ideologues of the conservative right are hampering the study of biology in the USA – refusing permission for federally-funded US scientists to speak at the recent conference in Thailand on HIV and AIDS, for example, because global strategies for managing and treating the disease conflict with their views on sex and sexuality. Another example (and perhaps a better one, in that it is Lysenkoist by its very nature) would perhaps be the prohibition by the Bush administration, explicitly at the demand of religious conservatives, of stem cell research – a field in which Europe, uninhibited by religious zealotry, is powering ahead. And of course there are the religious ideologues' flat-out lies, such as the claim that abortion causes breast cancer.

In a way, this demonstrates the difference between public attitudes to religion in the USA and Europe. In the USA, politicians are required to be true believers – the exact denomination is irrelevant, as long as they can say they’ve read their Bibles more than once and have a “personal relationship” with God, because that’s what the voters want to hear. In Europe, politicians who speak publicly about their religion are looked at with suspicion -- true believers of whatever stripe are simply not trusted. This is one of the reasons why the Dear Leader is in such trouble over the reasons for the invasion and occupation of Iraq – everyone but he can see that the intelligence was manipulated and that lies were told to justify the war, but because he is an evangelical Christian he believes that he cannot be wrong. His righteousness has become self-righteous; the more he refuses to accept error and blame, or even to acknowledge that there was error and there should be blame, the more negative his trust ratings become.

Changing the subject, **Sue Welch** mentions a television series called *Colonial House*. It sounds a lot like several similar reality shows in the UK, where a group of volunteers are selected to live like the citizens of earlier era and the results filmed for popular consumption. There was The 1940 House – no prizes for guessing what that was all about. Then The 1900 House, in which the volunteers were divided into masters and servants. Then The Eighteenth Century House, in which everyone poned about in Regency costumes (which actually placed in the early nineteenth century, and tells you everything you need to know about the producers’ sense of history). I believe there was even an attempt to live like Anglo-Saxons, which must have been indescribably filthy. The only thing I can say with certainty about these series is that I didn’t watch any of them. Reality television? My arse – they’re about as real as a CGI-heavy disaster movie.

And on that note, I’m advised by Judith that we must go along to the allotment to continue transplanting brassicas. No transplanted brassicas, as she points out, means no brussels sprouts this winter. And I’m rather partial to brussels sprouts....

Regards to you both,  
Joseph

☐**TKK**: *John Kerry has gotten a bit of mileage recently from a recent speech where he said “It is time we had a president who believes in science.”*☐

Milt Stevens  
6325 Keystone St.  
Simi Valley, CA 93063  
miltstevens@earthlink.net  
July 18, 2004

Dear Henry,

In *Knarley Knews* #106, you mention the volume of LOCs you receive. That brings up the relationship between size, circulation, and response. A couple of things have been



pretty much established over the years. A large fanzine receives proportionately less response than a small fanzine. A fanzine with a large circulation receives proportionately less response than a fanzine with a small circulation. *Twink* was a good example of these relationships. It was a medium sized fanzine with a very small circulation (100), yet it had a very healthy letter column.

There is a definite reason for these relationships. The total number of people who write letters to fanzines is not very large. If you any given year and added up all the names in all the letter columns in all the genzines in the English speaking world, the number wouldn’t be much above a hundred. Probably about thirty people make up the bulk of all the letter columns. So if you are starting a new genzine and want to be sure of having some letters in your letter column, the solution if obvious. Round up the usual suspects.

In the letter column, **E. B. Frohvet** alludes to the insular nature of the FAAN awards. This year, I found one aspect of the FAAN awards both surprising and confusing. I finished in eighth place for best fanzine for publishing *Fantasy Communicator*. With a vote of confidence like that, maybe I should actually publish a fanzine with that title. If anyone to date has used that title, it certainly wasn’t me. The really funny thing is that not one but several people must have voted for this non-existent fanzine.

Of course, this may be an incredibly diabolical plot directed against me. The plotters may have been trying to convince all of fanzine fandom that I hated them, since I wasn’t sending them copies of my fanzine. In reality, I only hate a few of the people who didn’t receive copies of *Fantasy Communicator*.

Yours truly,  
Milt

☐**TKK**: *The usual suspects is how I built up circulation in the late 80s. I used the LOCcols to pick likely candidates and have done fairly well as a result. BTW: my circulation has never broken 100 and it normally about 75.*☐

Lloyd Penney  
1706-24 Eva Rd.  
Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2  
Canada  
penneys@allstream.net  
July 20, 2004

Dear Knarley:

Issue 106 of *TKK* has arrived, and I've got time to put together a decent loc for a change. Explanations will come further along in the loc.

I agree with you (and **Gene Stewart**) on Ronald Reagan. Ronnie was an incompetent Irishman with the gift of the gab, a winning smile, and a good sense of timing, gained mostly through his acting days. Otherwise, he was just another harmful Republican president. But, what do I know? According to Bill O'Reilly, I'm just a northern wetback from Canuckistan.

I sympathize with **Rod Leighton** when it comes to loccing. Although I write hundreds of letters each year, I wonder if I'm doing anything of real use to fanzine readers and editors. I've been dropped off mailing lists before because my locs were deemed not sufficient to stay on the list. I get little feedback on other letters not controversial enough, perhaps? Not enough to base a multi-issue conversation on? I definitely plan to keep on loccing, but I would like to make sure I'm doing something worthwhile.

Yvonne and I both voted for the Hugos and then, we promptly sold our Noreascon 4 memberships. It isn't that we doing want to go, but it that we can't afford it. My May loc said I'd started a great new job, but I was laid off after seven weeks for lack of work. I believe the real reason is that the company has just completed an expensive move to larger facilities, and a new working agreement with their biggest client meant that the majority of the work I would have received could now go directly to client employees with their offices now on site. I believe my position was eliminated. However, I have a second interview with an AV/conference company in a few days, so I might be back to work soon. However, the selling of our memberships signals our decision to not go to Worldcons any more. Torcon really did a number on us; we plan to be local fans from now on. Also, if my employment is this spotty, we can't afford to take any trips that could cost us as much as C\$5000. Worldcons are just too expensive.

Love **Gene Stewart**'s article. Just because Ronnie seemed a pleasant enough fellow, he's being canonized by an American culture that tends to quasi-deify itself. One group wants Ronnie on Mt. Rushmore, and another wants him on the US\$10 bill or on the quarter. The Bush regime and the Republican party both tried desperately to connect themselves with the perceived humanity of Reagan because they both know they are in serious re-election trouble. The Reagan family, especially Ron Jr., put an end to that with their failure to support Dubya in his artificial war-footing. Now, thanks to more questionable intelligence and a few lies here and there, the

Bush regime is trying to connect Al-Qaeda and Iran, perhaps in a pretext to further invasion and further war footing, which seems to lead to an improved economy. The dirty tricks Bush and his cronies have pulled have surprised the world, and thank God most Americans are shocked by the behaviour of their government. Is this the true meaning of shock and awe?

There is a new lake ferry crossing from Rochester, New York to Toronto. Its had its problems, but it is now in regular service, and we watched it dock from a nearby park just a few nights ago. Rochester saw this service as a wonderful opportunity to go directly to the Big City and have a good time. (I never knew Rochesterians thought of Toronto as the Big City.) Toronto saw the ferry as a curiosity. Rochester built a snazzy new ferry terminal. Toronto pitched a tent. (And boy, was the mayor of Rochester pissed off) In the time since that happened, Toronto has built a large parking lot and a small terminal. Rochester accused Toronto of dropping the ball, Toronto pleaded guilty, and finally got to work. There's a small convention in Rochester every few years (Astronomicon), and the next one is in November of next year. Well look into the cost of the ferry when the time comes.

There's been lots of issues of *TKK* without a loc from me; then again, there's been just as many issues with 2 locs from me. My schedule of loc-writing doesn't always follow the *TKK* publishing schedule.

We might hit close to 100 degrees Fahrenheit over the next few days. I hope the air conditioner works fine tomorrow. So much for Voltaire, hm?

Time to fire this off into the ether, and hope it lands somewhere close to you. Wish me luck for the interview on Friday, and Ill let you know what happens. In the meantime, I hope to win Lotto 6/49 and make the whole question of employment moot. Take care, my best to the family, and see you nextish.

Yours,  
Lloyd Penney



☐CKK: *The Lake Michigan ferries don't typically run in November. Does the Toronto-Rochester ferry run that late in the year? I like the lottery too. An entirely voluntary tax that reduces my property taxes every year and I don't even buy tickets.*☐

Trinlay Khadro  
PO Box 240934  
Brown Deer, WI 53224-0934  
trin63@ren.dias.net  
22 Jul 2004

KT is planning on going to MSOE and taking a few classes from you. An 8 yr. contract means you'll probably still be there when she gets there. We've gotta get her signed up to the ACT and SAT soon.

The security guys checking your baggage probably said "Gee, another good son, going to visit his mom, and taking his power tools..." Too many people, including some parents see kids as "a bother" ... and the airlines and many other services feel perfectly justified charging extra for kids... "they're a hassle and a liability." I'm sure your kids are never a problem..but I had friends of my parents visit US when I was growing up, and **their** kids were terrors...at one point I was even locking my room to keep them from mangling my stuff... getting into my art supplies, or destroying many of my fragile collection items.(and we were all teens at the time...).

I'm getting some of the same hassles with medications, if the ibuprophen gets me hacking up blood **then** they'll change the pain medication. The ibu isn't really effective and it's mucking with my stomach. The tramadol is more effective, but I need more relief than the 3x/day I can take it when the pain is bad.

**Guy Lillian** also ran a "dose of reality" re: Ronald Reagan in his last ish. All the media in the world can't erase my memory. I recall in my pre-mom days being horrified that he was counting ketchup as a serving of a vegetable for school lunch. Though I've seen a few kids that use enough ketchup for it to count... I'm sure he'd never let his own kids get away with that.

**Sue:** KT & I have enjoyed the whole "house" series, even though we don't catch all the episodes. It brings history closer to the viewers in a way "play acting" falls short of. The History channel can't make it this real. I'm always touched by how the families are changed when they return to The Real World.

**Todd B** – The Giant Rabbit sounds Way Cool. There are some "outsider art" parks in Wisconsin & Michigan that include giant concrete critters and other stuff. I wish I could pull the names and Locations out of my brain, but I'm sure a net search would proceed any trips in search of them.

I'm pretty sure there are several in the area of Holland, Michigan. I can't seem to recall the locations of the others...

GATHER ALL THE CHEWING GUM ON...



...BOARD AND BLOW IT OUT THE AIR-LOCK! MAKE IT SO! TM oi.

I have photos somewhere of Paul Bunyon (life size =) and Babe the Blue Ox... I think from somewhere in the vicinity of Lake Superior.

**Kate:** have you seen the bumper sticker "The last time a Bush spoke for God it was on fire"?

"I brake for speed limits" implies slowing down (from nearly warp speed) when the speed trap is coming up. (or spying a cop car in the distance ahead.)

**Joseph:** Turns out we got heavy rains w/flooding in some areas to the north of me and south of the Welchii. Our basement got another dose of creek water. It's the landlord's problem and thank heavens I didn't have anything in storage down there since the last flood.

We try to get the flu shot every year. KT missed it this year, as when they were giving it, she had whooping cough, recovered in time that the shot was no longer available...within weeks, she had the flu...

**Rodney:** I think people, and communities have busy and slow periods. Mine usually hit in the mid to late winter or early spring and render me sort of speechless. Other times people get busy and don't get around to Loccing.

I don't expect there has been any significant change in FOSFAX since I dropped off the list. I'd be impressed if my resignation actually got enough attention or respect to modify any behaviors. I'm hardly a blip on their radar screen. I'm in fanzines for fun, if it becomes torture, I'll stop.

**Lloyd:** congrats on the job. My dad commuted between Michigan City Indiana, and Valparaiso for many years, my mom had refused to even consider moving again.

Re cmt **Gene** – Lost kid in a store may cause a panic if a man responds, slightly better chance of a positive response from a woman.

Hi to everyone else in the letters pages.

I've had about a 7 week flare up of the fibro... but had a good 4-5 days and even took KT shopping for clothes. I'm tired again, and tend to sleep a significant chunk of the afternoons. Pain goes from mostly manageable to a real &^\*%\$. Now it appears that KT may also have fibro, and the pediatrician is referring us to a Rheumatologist. (&^\*%) I hope she'll be able to cope with it and live her life fully despite it.

Huzzah for Megumi, she was fine for the neighborhood fireworks and watched from the windowsill, but the kids setting off firecrackers had her running back and forth to check on each of us.

She also requested that I turn on the ceiling fan (look up at it and Meow) and I got up, out of bed, and turned it on. I'm well trained!

Yep, recent news coverage revealed the opening of the ferry line, back and forth across the lake, but indeed expensive as Knarley noted. (I had thought it might go the way of the "Light Rail" discussion...it boiled up, bantered pro and con, and then just vanished.)

□CKK: *I recall one of those Candid Camera type shows that had a young girl look very dirty and forlorn on a sidewalk and women were more likely than men to stop to see if she needed help. I think the reasons are both cultural and biological. A few years ago we made a film in downtown Milwaukee involving a chase. One of our gags was having Kira (about 5 at the time) be in every shot as we ran past. She was rather timid and usually huddled in here blanket at curb-side. Only once did anyone ask if she was with someone.*□

Sheryl Birkhead  
25509 Jonnie Court  
Gaithersburg, MD 20882  
July 23, 2004

Tah dah and a drum roll... You get to be the trial run of technology in reverse. I just got a used typer from ebay. The typeface is a total surprise to me as the seller had no idea about anything to do with the oldies. I was trying to replace one of the three manual typers I, apparently, left behind in the move from the farm. Mine was an Olympia portable (that was what everyone was getting as high school graduation presents) that actually had elite type – so I was surprised when this (the ebay picture looked just like my old one) one typed in script. So, now I am looking for ribbons. I also found out they are still making new manual typers – surprised me and amused me when the print rate was listed as variable. Add to that the fact that I never actually learned how to type so I have about every excuse to make a mess of this.

When I was in high school I always wanted to take (what was then called) shop, but that was only for guys, so I never did learn how to use tools – no matter how interested I was. I continue to learn how to use "stuff" as I need to, but greatly

regret my inability to drive a nail straight! I would love to know how to do basic woodworking, but there just isn't enough time and money, so I just learn whatever it is that I need for the moment.

Case in point, my sister has given me a glue gun (years ago), but so far I have managed to work my way around ever having to use it, but it is one of those things I would like to, someday, learn how to use it and what its limitations actually are. I thought I had kept my father's toolbox, but that seems not to have been the case, and I most certainly am not going to go out and buy them. I really wanted to play with the brace and bit, but couldn't even locate the box, let alone any of the tools!

My sister lives in Utah, but has never mentioned the liquor laws. Hmm, since they are Mormon, I guess there is not reason they would have. I recall some of the info being covered with the Olympic coverage and never did quite understand the whole set-up.

Celebrex is not an innocuous drug. Out of curiosity, have you tried chondroitin type of supplements? Part of the goal would be to prevent arthritic changes from starting – just a thought.

I hope **Rodney** re-thinks his decision and keeps on contributing, even if it has to be on a more sporadic basis. If not, then thank you **Rodney** for all your columns.

I went to see *I, Robot* on opening day. I had only found out two days before that it was not actually the book and I'm glad I knew that before seeing the movie. It "looks" a lot like *Bladerunner* in the darkness aspect. I thought it was entertaining, but no more than that and I would have liked to see more plot. It "seemed" that the special effects were the crux of the movie and not parts that made the whole function. Would I go see it again? Yes, but not a full price (even if I did pay full matinee price). However, I really did **not** like the way Dr. Susan Calvin was portrayed and have no idea why/who the murder victim actually "was", but then again, I was expecting the movie to have a lot in common with Asimov's book and it did not.

I tuned in to the *Colonial House* a few episodes and then caught it when there were several episodes back to back. Personally, I found it more engrossing and "realistic" than some of the other "back to" shows have been; and I enjoyed it.

Nice illo by **Kurt** on page 11 and **Scott** on page 20.

Sheryl

□CKK: *Woodworking is much harder to do right than most home repairs. You need a much more expensive tool set and it is hard to make a nice finished product. Most home repairs can be done with a little tool and product knowledge and some common sense. Hot glue guns are simple. Insert the glue stick and plug it in over newspaper or other drop cloth. After it heats up press the trigger and melted glue oozes out the tip. Try not*

to burn yourself. The tendonitis cleared up so I'm no longer medicated for my shoulder.□

Robert Lichtman  
P.O. Box 30  
Glen Ellen, CA 95442  
robertlichtman@yahoo.com  
28 Jul 2004

Hi, Henry –

I didn't realize I was "going to write [you] some witty articles," but for now I'll have to make do with a last-minute-save-my-place-on-your-mailing-list letter of comment. My once former sterling record of writing LoCs far and wide that netted me some high positions in the FAAN awards best letterhack category in years past has been shot all to hell due to my renewed desire to read something other than fanzines – in recent years, lots of Fredric Brown, just to name one category – and I don't know if I'll ever get it back again.

It was interesting to read your comments on the SFBC after my letter in No. 104, particularly that their prices "haven't changed much relative to the skyrocketing cost of paperbacks and other editions in the major bookstores." This must be how they obtain market share and continue to be a viable enterprise, and it's good to know that – although I'm not going to rush out and rejoin since mostly I don't read SF these days.

No one in the following issue seems to have picked up on **Rodney Leighton's** vague reference to [www.efanzines.com](http://www.efanzines.com) as "a net thing with lots of electronic sf fanzines on it." Indeed, that's essentially what it is, but if one is on-line and doesn't go there on a regular basis one is missing out on a lot of fanzines that now exist only in electronic form. These are mostly in Adobe Acrobat PDF format, and if one's computer doesn't already have the Adobe Acrobat Reader on it, it's a free download at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com). There are, of course (and as you observed at the end of **Rodney's** review), other sites where electronic fanzines can be obtained, but I would venture to say that [www.efanzines.com](http://www.efanzines.com) is the major one.

In No. 106, I enjoyed your description of Salt Lake City, which fills in a lot of detail that I didn't get during my one and only visit there in 1970. I was traveling across country with Dick and Pat Lupoff and their three children in a two-Volvo caravan. Earlier in Berkeley at a going-away party at the end of their visit during which they bought the house in which they still live, they'd asked if anyone would be interested in coming east and driving across with them so they could split their three children between the two cars. Being self-employed at the time and able to spare the time, I took them up on it. We arrived in SLC after midnight one day in May, and the temperature was well in the 90s. I don't know if the interstate now bypasses the city altogether, but back then it ended and one had to drive across town on an extremely wide main drag. It looked to us like a highway commercial strip anywhere with fast food restaurants, convenience stores and gas

stations amidst many motels. Even though it was very late, the streets and sidewalks were crowded with people, probably because at that hour it was about as cool as it was going to get. Rather than stay in SLC and then have to drive across the Bonneville Salt Flats during daylight hours, we opted to drive on without stopping. We made it to the first town with motels in Nevada and into our rooms just as a sudden rainstorm that had been flashing thunder and lightning behind us as we drove across the salt flats finally hit and drenched the entire town. The next day there were newly bloomed wildflowers on the Nevada desert as we continued west.

Contrary to **Gene Stewart's** statement that the rewriting-history Reagan mania that struck the official air waves after his death was "beyond anything PKD ever saw coming, mind control on a national level," I would say that it was **exactly** the sort of thing Phil wrote about all the time, especially in his mid-period novels.

Regarding **E.B. Frohvet's** comments about how he "really can't see how *Trap Door* [received] the FAAN Award for 'best fanzine' for 2003, on the basis of its one issue consisting mainly of a glurky piece of fanfic," I would observe that I was also surprised. I thought that *Chunga* – another product of what EBF terms "the Inner Cult" – would take the nod, although I wasn't surprised when "glurky fanfic" author Gordon Eklund won the "best fanwriter" category (and was mildly disappointed that Dan Steffan, who illustrated the piece, came in second – albeit a close second (seven votes) – as "best fanartist").

Like **Lloyd Penney**, I also enjoy **Joseph Major's** *Alexiad* a lot more than I ever did *FOSFAX*, the latter being dominated far too much by its right wing editors and their crew of supportive letterhacks. **Major** covers the part of *FOSFAX* I could relate to – the reviews and commentary on SF – which of course he wrote most of for that zine. It's a good transplant.

Best wishes,  
Robert Lichtman

{TKK: Salt Lake City still have amazingly wide streets in its downtown core, but the interstate now circles around the city even though it drops down through the pass immediately west of town.}

#### We also heard from:

Todd & Nora Bushlow, Lysa DeThomas (who is enjoying a visit to Israel), Brad Foster (who was inspired by **Kate Yule's** LOC to coin a new bumper sticker: "Go around me, I've already gotten enough speeding tickets, thank you."), Terry Jeeves (who enjoyed the account of *Colonial House*), Karen Johnson (who received her visa to move the US), Mike Kingsley, Guy Lillian, Rich Lynch, Michael Pederson, KRin Pender-Gunn (eCOA: [knringunny@optusnet.com.au](mailto:knringunny@optusnet.com.au)), Ruth Shields, Garth Spencer, and Sue Welch



## Fanzines Received in Trade

fo the Atlanta Science Fiction Society. These issue contains reviews and items of local interest plus commentary on light polution.

*MaryMark Press* by Mark Sonnenfeld; 45-08 Old Millstone Dr.; East Windsor, NJ 08520; irregular; the usual. Various strange publications with experimental writing styles.

*Memphen 279-81* by Michael Kingsley; %MSFA; PO Box 820534; Memphis, TN 38182-0534; montly; \$12/12 or the usual. The unofficial publication of the Memphis Science Fiction Association. These issues (two from 2002, one from theis year) seem to have been distributed to endorse Tom Foster for fan artist Hugo.

*Nice Distinctions 6* by Arthur Hlavaty; 206 Valentine St; Yonkers, NY 10704-1814; hlvaty@panix.com; quarterly; \$1 or the usual. A small perzine with discussion on the recent International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts.

*Nth Degree 10* by Michael D. Pederson; 77 Algrace Blvd.; Stafford, VA 22556; editor@nthzine.com; <http://www.nthzine.com/>; irregular; free or \$15/6 if mailed. A semi-prozine with clear fannish roots that contains a mix of fiction, articles, poetry, and humor.

*Opuntia 54.5* by Dale Speirs; Box 6830; Calgary, Alberta; Canada T2P 2E7; irregular; \$3 or the usual. A perzine is-sue with commentary on suburban sprawl and the Calgary Stampede.

*Rodney's Messy Zine Like Thing #3* by Rodney Leighton; RR #3; Tatamagouche, NS B0K 1V0; Canada; irregular; editorial whim. Listed here only because I'm anal about these things. Rodney doesn't subscribe to the usual so you'll have to write him to figure out how to get copies.

*The Royal Swiss Navy Gazette #1* by Garth Spencer; PO Box 15335, V.M.P.O.; Vancouver, BC V6B 5B1; garthspencer@shaw.ca; <http://www.vcn.bc.ca/sig/rsn>; irregular; the usual. An interesting genzine that doesn't appear often enough.

*Vanamonde No. 548-52* by John Hertz; 236 S Coronado St No 409; Los Angeles, CA 90057; This is John's APA-L zine with interesting tidbits.

*Visions of Paradise #99* by Bob Sabella; 24 Cedar Manor Ct; Budd Lake, NJ 07828-1023; BSabella@optonline.net; quarterly; the usual. This is a fine example of a personal zine which includes considerable commentary. It is published in a three-part harmony (The Passing Scene - diary, Wondrous Stories - reviews and reading, and Halcyon Days - LOCs).

*Weirdness Before Midnight #3* by Dave Szurek; 505 North F #829; Aberdeen, WA 98520-2601; dszurek@iopener.net; irregular; \$2.50 or the usual. See review in Rodney's article elsewhere in this issue.

*The Whirligig 9* by ???; 4809 Avenue N #117; Brooklyn, NY 11234-3711; editor@thewhirligig.com; semi-annual; \$3 or submission or trade. A literary zine with fiction and poetry.

"The usual" generally refers to either a letter of comment (LOC), a contribution, or trading with your fanzine or generally any friendly means of communication. As a general rule I don't list internet-only fanzines.

*Alexiad Vol. 3 No. 4* by Lisa and Joseph T. Major; 1409 Christy Ave.; Louisville, KY 40204-2040; bi-monthly; \$2 or the usual. A nice fanzines with lots of book reviews and a solid letter column.

*Challenger 20* by Guy H. Lillian, III; PO Box 53092; New Orleans, LA 70153-3092; <http://www.challzine.net/>; GHLLIII@yahoo.com; irregular; \$6 or the usual. This is a fine genzine with good articles, lots of photos and letters. Every bit worthy of its Hugo nomination.

*Erg 166* by Terry Jeeves; 56 Red Scar Dr; Scarborough, YO12 5RQ; United Kingdom; terryjeeves@madasafish.com. It is the end of an era. Terry is calling it quits after 45 years. I will certainly miss *Erg* and I hope Terry and his fillos will be around for many years to come.

*Ethel the Aardvark #112* by Sue Ann Barber; PO Box 212; World Trade Centre; Melbourne, VIC 3005; Australia; b-monthly; \$25/year or the usual. This is the official zine of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club and covers club news and SF related material in Australia as well as comic reviews in this issue.

*Fanzine Fanatique* by Keith Walker; 6 Vine St.; Lancaster LA1 4UF; England; KWalker777@aol.com; quarterly; exchange or editorial whim. A short zine composed primarily of capsule reviews of other zines.

*File 770:143* by Mike Glyer; 705 Valley View Ave.; Monrovia, CA 91016; MikeGlyer@cs.com; irregular; \$8/5 or the usual. This has become a mostly annual news zine with plenty of con reports and discussion of Mike's rapidly growing daughter.

Flying Saucer Information Center Materials by James H. Wales; 7803 Ruanne Ct.; Pasadena, MD 21122. Somehow I received this packet of stuff which holds little interest for me. Let me know if you'd like me to pass it on to you.

*Future Times Vol. 7 No. 6 & 7* by Jayne Rogers; %ASFS; PO Box 98308; Atlanta, GA 30359-2008; missjayne@minspring.com; monthly, \$12/year. This is the official fanzine

## **Knarley's Planned Con Attendance**

Ditto 17 (Orlando, FL)

October 8-10, 2004

Mars in 2095 (Worldcon 153) Marsport, Mars

Labor Day, 2095



### **You Got this Issue Because ...**

- \_\_\_\_\_ **The tomatoes in the garden are now ripening and they are too good for words.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **I could write a Z schema to describe sending you this issue (Formal Methods), but then I'd never be able to live with myself.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **You are going to write me some witty articles.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **We trade**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **You sent me a contribution. Thanks.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **You sent me a letter of ~~complaint~~ comment.**

You have \_\_\_\_\_ issues left before you are designated a black hole and dropped from the mailing list.