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UNIFYING STAR WARS FANDOM

A Panel Discussion Held at MediaWest*Con 12

Thanks to Tim Blaes for Providing the Tape

Panel Members: Cheree Cargill, Melea Fisher, Pat Grant, Judith Yuenger

("Aud." indicates comment from audience. Individual names will be used if recognized.)

CC: Hi, everyone, and welcome to the STARSKY & HUTCH panel. (laughter) Well, obviously, this is the STAR WARS panel so if you're in the wrong place, stay anyway because we'd like you in the fandom. We might get you interested.

PG: What is the title of this?

CC: "Unifying STAR WARS Fandom", which we kind of started last year. We discovered that there were still lots and lots and lots of STAR WARS fans out there but we were all broken up into little groups. And nobody knew about anybody else, so we decided we would try to get us all together in one big group again and have lots of fun and I think we've been fairly successful over the past year.

PG: Unification, Part 3. The Next Generation.

CC: So, I suppose we should introduce ourselves to those who don't know us. I'm Cheree

Cargill and I do SOUTHERN ENCLAVE and A TREMOR IN THE FORCE.

JY: I'm Judith Yuenger and I run the Star Awards.

MF: I'm Melea Fisher and I publish ON A CLEAR DAY YOU CAN SEE DAGOBAH.

PG: I'm Pat Grant and run Forces of the Empire and we publish a newsletter called BOUND BY THE FORCE and a zine called IMPERIUM which I promise will be out by next year. Now that we have Arwen helping us with it. (Recognizes Arwen Rosenbaum in the audience.)

AR: Well, then I'll be helping you and Melea.

JY: And me!

CC: Arwen should stand up and take a bow.

PG: I think Arwen has become fandom's

typesetter. "I can do typesetting. Does anybody need help?" She'll learn!

MF: Never volunteer!

AR: Stop me before I volunteer again!

PG: And we also have a new zine, TALES FROM THE CANTINA, which is available this year. On the dealer's table, if we ever get it open, or in the cantina which, by the way, we are running a STAR WARS auction. Anybody's welcome to come in and go through the auction. It's silent bids. There's a lot of really nice items in there. You're welcome.

CC: Well, I don't really know what we're... Obviously, we got together and discussed what we're going to talk about.

MF: Actually, we just opened the program book and were reading through it and said, "Oh, I'm on a panel!"

PG: I don't know about the rest of you but I have found that the last year, ever since the last MediaWest when we kind of started this, "Oh, so that's who you are; well, let's keep in touch," I've gotten letters from all over the world this last year. I got a letter from two different Italian clubs who want to correspond with us. One who does something similar to what we do with personas and doing correspondence back and forth in character, and they want to start up an interclub relationship with our club. And a club out in Australia that we heard from and it's like there's this blossoming and it's so wonderful. You know, a few years ago, it was like nobody wanted to mention anybody else's group or zine and now it's wonderful. It's really great.

CC: It's like we had gotten to the point of, "Oh, role-playing. I don't want to talk to them! They're those weirdos."

MF: Yeah, they write those weird letters in that--

CC: I think it really has come together in the last year. There was a tremendous response as Pat said, really, from all over the world. We heard from a lot of people we didn't know were out there. And I know every issue of SOUTHERN ENCLAVE seems to have new names in it. New fans coming in

that have found some group and, like most fandoms, we're so interconnected, it's almost like networking. Somebody reads a zine and sees somebody else's name and decides they'll write and it goes from there.

Aud: So the problem really wasn't so much that STAR WARS fandom is "dying", it just lost communication.

CC: Just lost communication. Yeah.

JY: Everybody was off in different sections.

PG: Fragmented.

Ann Birmstiel:

You know, I used to take Marion McChesney's COMMUNICATIONS CONSOLE but it had a different list of zines. But then she quit about three years ago and I kind of fell out of it and then last year I picked up a flyer for ZINE SCENE and I found out about SOUTHERN ENCLAVE from there.

CC: I got a letter from someone—I can't remember who—who had done illustrations for STAR WARS zines back in the mid-80's and then kind of got out of fandom and the people they had been illoing for had also gotten out of fandom, and that was their only link. So, this person had been searching for five or six years for some way to get get back into fandom and they finally found SOUTHERN ENCLAVE or HIBERNATION SICKNESS or one of the other zines and said, "Hey, I'm not the last living STAR WARS fan in the world. There are still others out there."

Z.P. Florian:

If I may say, shouldn't we have a kind of a newsletter, something, maybe maximum two pages, that costs barely more than the mailing, at least once or twice a year, to go out to everybody in the whole world who ever wrote a fanzine.

MF: (to JY) Well, I think your Star Awards go out to just about everybody, don't they?

JY: Yes.

CC: We tried to compile as many names as possible and get them on a mailing list.

ZP: Yes, get a mailing list. Mail out--



Cheree Cargill, Melea Fisher, Pat Grant

JY: It's 300 people long.

ZP: --who's seeking contributions, what is available, what is for sale. But, like, I know anything in the whole world that comes out in SOUTHERN ENCLAVE or HIBERNATION SICKNESS. I don't know a blooming thing about Forces of the Empire. Nothing. Nothing that they have for sale, what they're doing, what kind of zines they're doing. And I always have more stories than zines. So, it's not that I'm not looking. It's that I don't know who to look for.

Ming Wathne:

Well, obviously, this has been our problem, which I've been speaking about for two years. And we are trying, all of us, in different situations. All those zines that we're putting out now should have advertisements for other zines.

JY: Which they didn't do before.

MW: Which they haven't done for quite a long time. And with the Library and the Star Awards, we were also more or less planning to make a cross-reference and this is building within the area itself of artists, costume-makers, story-writers, so that people can cross-reference and find out who is doing what, but it's going to take a lot of effort not only on our part but also on the guys that do the writing. Let us know what you want to do, as well.

CC: Ming ought to come on up here. She's one of the—

Panelists:

Yeah. Come on up here. Get up here!
(Applause)

MW: (Joins panelists at table) I should have known better. Well, basically, that's it. We have been hollering—all of us—for a couple of years about communication and it wasn't until I pulled my blaster and said, "Okay, you do it!" (Indicates JY) This gal is the most incredibly concise person you'll ever want to know. She has everything but the eye teeth and this is the kind of thing we need. But we also need input. Lots and lots of input.

CC: I think Ming and Judith both deserve a hand for all they have done in the last year.
(Applause)

PG: I've got one. (Pulls a dismembered hand from a bag)

MF: Yeah, she's got Luke's in there.

PG: We just roasted Luke Skywalker. The Empire is returning some things to him that he left behind.

JY: Oh, I'm sorry I missed that!

Tim: I had a LoC to SOUTHERN ENCLAVE that got gobbled by the mail and I had suggested the name the "Antilles Award". That way you could give the winners a "Wedgie." (Boos and hisses)

PG: Anyone have a blaster?

CC: Tina had a question.

Tina Bentrup:
Well, what are the rumors about what George is doing? Is he working on the movie or what? I mean, can we--

PG: George says the same thing. "When I get through with my present project, I will start working on the next STAR WARS series."

CC: In other words, the movie will be out when we're standing in line waiting for tickets.

TB: Something that Maggie wrote in SOUTHERN ENCLAVE about a rumor about how much the film was budgeted for and about a set, a miniature of the Imperial City that was 1/6th of a mile long--

CC: That came off, I think, the Prodigy bulletin board.

Arwen:
I saw some stuff on Internet that said some special effects shops had closed down all outside work and were working on one--

CC: Yeah, that rumor's been going around for about a year.

PG: There was a definite rumor that I heard a couple of years ago from... The rumor came from a person that worked for Lucasfilm...for what that's worth...that Lucas, at that time had just finished the script and they were looking into casting. This was two years ago. Now the rumor's going around that ILM has shut down and is working on one particular project. The timing on that is just about right if the original rumor had any truth to it at all. We might be looking at something within the next year or two.

ZP: Something must be going on because I walked into the Dalton's Bookstore and they have this display. They are selling all the STAR WARS books, all the Han Solo books--

PG: Yeah, everything's being revamped right now.

CC: Circumstantial evidence, everything sort of points to it.

ZP: The new Dark Horse comics.

PG: There's no definite proof, but everything is pointing to it.

Aud: I don't know if I'm the only one who's heard this, but a couple of years ago, I heard that there was as definite 1997 release date.

CC: Yeah, that seems to be the date.

Aud: I heard that they were going to start working on it before then, but it would come out in 1997. I haven't heard that that has changed.

Aud2: That would be 20 years then.

Aud3: I work in a bookstore and the reason they're out is the new HEIR TO THE EMPIRE sequel. The latest children's books to come out and this is their way of reintroducing... So, they've rereleased all of the original and they're redone the Han Solo books because they're out of print now. So that's why. It's got nothing to do with the movie.

Tim: Sorry, but if the market can sustain these reprints, that's maybe not much but some additional impetus to continue until the next movie's out.

Aud3: But it's got nothing to do with it.

MW: Well, there are two things you have to keep in mind about Hollywood and Lucas. Number one, he is a great one for hitting things when they're hot. Number two, Hollywood is Hollywood and can you figure a better way of building mercenary--if you want to put it that way-- points for books, magazines, new this and that, than saying there's going to be another picture? Keep that in mind until you actually see the ad in the paper for the picture at the movie house, don't get too excited about it because this goes on all the time out there.

Aud: Well, about the film, I think you have to watch VARIETY and the trade publications.

CC: I think that's true, that probably VARIETY or HOLLYWOOD REPORTER or even the LA TIMES would have more concrete information--

Aud: Did it say anything about the idea that they were going to do all three movies at once and then edit it and put them out one after

the other?

MF: Yeah, I think that's what I'd heard.

Aud: For 1996 or 1997 release, for the first trilogy.

CC: As someone said, "May we all live long enough to see Episode 9."

MF: Yeah, we'll all be geriatric.

Aud: Yeah, they won't have to worry about old age makeup.

MF: I don't know if they can afford Harrison Ford's price anymore.

Tim: Then there was the red herring that was a red herring—"Red Tails." We thought "Red Tails" was going to be a "Blue Harvest" but actually it turned out to be a real movie—darn it!

CC: Which I haven't seen in the theaters either! I don't know if that one ever got—

Aud: Like SLIPSTREAM? Did anyone ever see that?

Aud2: I'm a new fan and I don't know where to—

MF: If you're a new fan, probably your best bet is if you pick up some zines here and write to those editors and say, "Can you tell me about anybody—"

Aud2: Do you have an APA, like the other ones have?

MF: No.

CC: I think that was kind of like what Z.P. was talking about, that it would be a good idea, probably, to start an APA going.

Aud2: Who do you send somebody to who goes, "I want to know more about STAR WARS fandom"? Who do you send them to?

CC: Probably SOUTHERN ENCLAVE, I guess.

MW: SOUTHERN ENCLAVE is probably the best place.

Aud2: I just wasn't sure where to go to because I'm new to fandom in general. And I can't pick up a zine and go, okay, I—

CC: SOUTHERN ENCLAVE is probably geared more to fandom than say, BOUND BY THE FORCE, or some of the others. HIBERNATION SICKNESS is—

Aud: Well, aren't you writing the Library?

Aud2: Yes, I'm writing the Library.

JY: Ming has all the fanzines.

CC: We never introduced Ming. Ming Wathne runs the Corellian Archives which kind of started out with Maggie Nowakowska as kind of a lending library of STAR WARS zines and they ran it for about a year and kind of got bogged down, I think, and had to give it up and Ming courageously jumped in and took it over, and it has now really turned into an archive project. Not just STAR WARS zines, but everything.

Aud: Has anybody been here since STAR WARS came out? I mean, how old is anybody in fandom? I've been in fandom since—

CC: Well, Mary and I [indicates Mary Urhausen in audience] are two of the dinosaurs here. I've actually been in fandom since about '72. I was in STAR TREK fandom until about '78 and I went through a burnout period and then in '81, I came back in.

MW: One WARPED SPACE zine said, "Contains no STAR WARS."

Aud: When did they start doing STAR WARS in WARPED SPACE?

CC: Oh, I don't know. I think Bev Clark did one of the first STAR WARS zines—SKYWALKER. I think she probably had the first pure STAR WARS zine out.

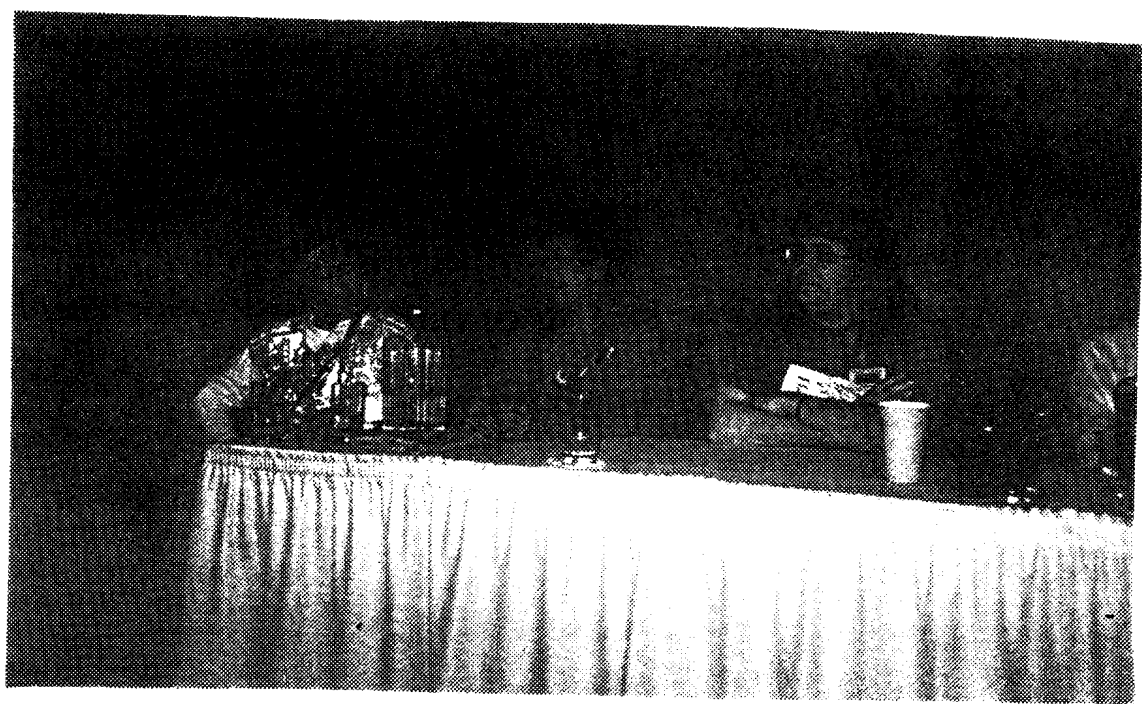
Tim: There was this really obscure, nearly letterzine that came out before that called HYPERSPACE.

CC: And there was a letterzine called ALDERAAN.

Aud: And JUNDLAND WASTES.

CC: JUNDLAND WASTES came out after ALDERAAN.

Tim: Because the thing is, HYPERSPACE did run fiction and poetry. It wasn't just a total news zine. They published my first stuff in there.



Ming Wathne, Judith Yuenger, Cheree Cargill

- MW: If I remember correctly, that was the one that got slapped down.
- Tim: No, not HYPERSPACE. It was DARK LORD.
- MW: No, this was earlier than that. There were six issues and they had to discontinue because of Lucasfilm. It came out for six issues, then had to quit producing because they were told they were doing a "no-no".
- Tim: I don't understand. What "no-no"?
- PG: In the very beginning of STAR WARS fandom, George Lucas did not understand fandom and there was one group in Florida--and I'm not sure where the one you're talking about--
- MW: Same one.
- PG: That they sent the FBI into these people's houses, the FBI confiscated all of their materials, all of their punching machines, everything, for copyright infringement laws. This was before they got more specific in the laws and what was allowable and what was not. And Lucas took them to court and sued them.
- Tim: I didn't hear about this.
- CC: This was the very, very beginning.
- Tim: That seems like that would have drizzled out. Surely we would have found out about that.
- CC: Well, I don't think any of us were in fandom, I mean STAR WARS fandom, at the time.
- MF: This was like, probably, '78. Right after the first movie.
- PG: Yeah, right in the first year. I think it was like probably one of the first ones. The movie came out and they went, "Oh, this is great," and the zine came out and Lucas over-reacted. And it was after that that some fan groups approached him and they sat down and said, "This is what fandom's about."
- Aud: You used to send issues of your fanzine to him.
- MW: Yeah, that's where the beginning to the Library came from.
- Aud: And he'd pay you for them, too.
- PG: Yeah, we sent him all our club newsletters and everything.
- Aud: Does he ever write back?
- PG: I never got anything from him. We got stuff from Maureen Garret all the time.
- Tim: I knew that this man does not have time to read these things.
- PG: He had his own inner police, I think. Fandom police.

MF: "You might want to see this one, George."

PG: I think he looked through some of the stuff, because one of the letters I got from Maureen, she said, "Oh, and by the way, George found the cartoon on page such and such rather amusing." Now, I don't know if he actually read everything or just glanced through them, but she did make a remark--

Tim: Gary Kurtz once let slip something-- Now I don't think he wanted to be in a position where he wanted to admit that he read anything, but he let it slip out, just in casual conversation, that he did. By the way, you ever hardly hear about Gary Kurtz anymore. Where is he?

Aud: I think he was involved in that horrible SLIPSTREAM thing.

CC: I was just thinking, talking to Melea, about '84 or '85, Jeanine Hennig was working on an outline for a professional book on fandom and had not actually written it, but had just done an outline, maybe a chapter for a proposal and had sent it to Lucasfilm for permission, and she got back a very quick, very curt "cease and desist" letter from them.

Tim: Wait a minute-- What?

CC: Yeah!

Tim: How could they tell her to stop doing a non-fiction book about fandom?

CC: They did.

Tim: NO!

CC: He did. Well, he threatened legal action.

PG: Because in the book there would be used the words STAR WARS--

Tim: You can't do that!

CC: He did it.

PG: Well, the things he might have copyrights on--anything he has particular copyrights on--

Tim: He can't stop anything that is not--

MF: He can write a letter saying, "I don't want you doing this." And she can take it anyway she wants. And, at the time, since she put a zine out--

Aud: What's this about David Prowse coming to MediaWest?

PG: There's a good chance that we may be able to get Dave to come here. I finally got a letter from him a few weeks ago and he's really enthusiastic about it. We explained to him in our letters that this isn't going to be your normal average convention. You would be coming here as a member of the con. There are no celebrities at MediaWest. As far as the schedule, we'd give you the program book like everyone else and you'd pick out what you want to do or don't do. And, you know, if you want to run a panel, you can contact the people and schedule a panel, but everything would be up to you. And, he's really excited about it. One of the reasons is that he hasn't been invited to a convention in the United States in several years and he misses the United States fans. He's looking forward to it. So, it's looking really good. I've been told that might have a donation for the cost of his travel expenses which would help tremendously. Somebody else suggested that we get Mark Hamill at the same. I said, "One at a time, one at a time."

Aud: I see a trend toward new zines and new fans. You know, a lot of the old fans are back.

CC: Exactly.

PG: Well, I think a lot of it has to do with that there was a big period of time where everybody was saying, "Why are you into that? STAR WARS is dead." The problem we were talking about-- the lack of communication. People lost their sources and didn't know where to go, so they got into other things. Now, with the resurgence and the pickup of the communications lines here, they're starting to find out, all these things are still here--good--and getting back into it.

ZP: There are thousands of people out there who have no idea that there are such things as fanzines. I got into the Prodigy network and 14-year-old kids are talking about it. And they are asking, "What's a fanzine?"

- And I have this young girl, my god-daughter, in her classroom of 35 people, two of the boys, 13-year-old boys, are talking STAR WARS—they have no idea there is such a thing as fanzines. I mean, there are lots of people out there who don't know and they would be interested, they would want to know. Most of the fanzines might be out of their range financially but something like SOUTHERN ENCLAVE or HIBERNATION SICKNESS, something that's not that expensive, would definitely be interesting for them and once a year or so a major fanzine. But I don't know how to get to those people.
- MF: They'd probably enjoy the fan club, too. The Forces of the Empire.
- Aud: Well, STAR TREK had the Welcommittee.
- CC: Yeah, it's still going on.
- Tim: Would the Library qualify as the Star Wars Welcommittee?
- CC: Well, no, not really. I don't think so.
- MW: I think that something like that in STAR WARS definitely would be an advantage, but first of all, we've got to consolidate what we have and spread out with what we have and let people know we are still alive. That's the main thing.
- PG: And I think we've got to start in getting something like that with what Judy's doing. I mean, she's compiling a list of everybody. And everyone's beginning to know she's kind of a central information point and possibly something like that can bloom out of what she's starting.
- CC: Whatever happened to the information center? Not the awards, but the—
- JY: Well, it's there. I've started on it, but you don't realize. There's just tons of stuff to be done. And I've got 300 names on the list of STAR WARS fans. Not all of them ever respond but I have some clubs in England, Germany, Italy, Australia... So, one of these days...I wanted to get these awards done because this right now was the massive thing. Once we get that done, I'm going to start back on that again.
- CC: You know, I think one of the most interesting things I've heard recently about STAR WARS fandom came out of HIBERNATION SICKNESS, and Lisa and Lorrie and Melanie had been contacted by a group of Russian fans. STAR WARS has just—in the past year—been shown in Russia. It's really because it was considered imperialistic, capitalistic propaganda. It was considered by the Soviet government as Cold War propaganda. That the Empire was the Soviet Union and they were the bad guys and so these people are absolutely brand-spanking-new to STAR WARS, at all! But it's got a fair following there.
- MW: That person has a couple of questions—
- Aud: Why don't you put an ad in STARLOG and other publications? You wouldn't have to put it in every month but if you put it in a couple of times a year—
- CC: A lot of people do.
- PG: We've put Forces of the Empire in there a couple of times, but it's been a while back. It wasn't a big response but we received about five members out of it. But that was five members we wouldn't have had. It's free advertising.
- CC: I've never advertised in STARLOG because I don't have the time to devote to the mail that would come in. It's all I can do to answer the mail I've got right now.
- JY: Well, we could put that in. That would be no big deal. We could put as the Star Wars Fandom File, because that's what we originally named it.
- Aud: I know you do SOUTHERN ENCLAVE. Who does HIBERNATION SICKNESS?
- CC: Lisa Thomas is the editor and Lorrie Cherry and Melanie Guttierrez...
- ZP: You can find flyers for Melanie all over the place. For ANOTHER SKY... which is her fanzine. The second issue is coming out... You can get her address from the flyer. HIBERNATION SICKNESS is very decently priced and lists all the fanzines that are coming up. It also has stories and poetry and...
- CC: HIBERNATION SICKNESS is a great little zine. It comes out quarterly and they have a real

fun sense of humor. It's a funzine.

Aud: Well, you were talking about kids, but I found a couple of people in our office fancy themselves writers and we just started talking about science fiction and they're fans, and I said, "Well, do you guys know about fanzines?" "What?" I said, "Fanzines." And they said, "Tell me more about it." And I said, "Well, that's where people learn to write, where they hone their skills." And they were fascinated. So, talk to your co-workers. It was like opening up a whole new world, I mean their eyes just lit up.

ZP: I went into one of the colleges and I walk through the planetarium and there sits this lady who is talking about the stars, and she has this wonderful tissue box--Yoda. So, it turns out she's a STAR WARS collector. She doesn't know anybody. She thinks she's the only one in the whole world.

JY: There are a lot of fans like that.

MW: That's why we're trying to open this up.

Joyce Yasner?

I think one of the problems is that it's really very hard to do a convention. I mean, I don't even know if Lucas will let you do a convention, but doing a con and bringing the people in, it's very expensive.

CC: I went to a small convention in Dallas a few months ago that had Brent Spiner as the guest and it cost twenty bucks a day to get in.

Aud: A Creation Con?

CC: No. I nearly fell over because, used to, \$15 would get you the whole weekend at a convention and now it's \$20 a day.

PG: Yeah, I've seen a couple that are like \$45 or \$50 for the weekend but it's like because they're trying to bring in all these, like they might have six stars coming in and they're trying to cover them.

MW: Or, another problem with your convention is—with the exception of this one here—very often the fanzine room is next to the toilet, three floors down, and—they don't know you're there, they don't know what you're

doing, and they don't know what— We've got to push a little more on these conventions that are being put together to say, "Hey! We're—"

JY?: You do the con! That's the point. In STAR TREK, we did the convention. And we had to bring in the people to pay for the hotel, and eventually the STAR TREK guests wind up and decided they wanted money to come. But initially they came for free. Everybody. I mean, Leonard Nimoy would just walk in the door—"Hi, here I am." And we'd go, "Oh, my God—" and we'd try to hussle him off before he got trampled. I mean, they would just show up. Or they'd call up and, you know, kids would answer the phone, "Hi, this is Lt. Uhura here," and they'd go, "This is Mr. Spock" and the kid would go— plunk! and fall out! But that's the way it was when we first were doing STAR TREK. I think the first was in '72.

MW: Well, obviously it's not going to be that way anymore.

JY? Well, these professionally run cons are very bad.

CC: I will plug another fan-run con that I think is up and coming and is worth going to and that's Revelcon in Houston.

MW: Yeah, yeah.

CC: I've gone the last two years and it's kind of increased in quality and in membership each year and it's almost like MediaWest-South.

Aud: Well, if you go to Revelcon, is there going to be enough STAR WARS activities there to make it worth your while?

CC: Well, let's make STAR WARS activities!

MW: That's what we're doing. Cheree and I were there this year.

PG: That's what's happened here. I mean, at MediaWest*Con a few years ago, there wasn't a whole...I mean, there was a lot going on, there were a lot of fans here, but there wasn't a whole lot of organized things going on and, in the last couple of years, Lori has told me that we are now the largest organized group at the con.

CC: Three years ago, there was one STAR WARS panel and it was on Monday afternoon. And I missed it because my plane left at 12:00.

Aud: Here?

CC: Here. And so, it's like, the squeaky wheel gets the grease.

MW: And we can really squeak!

MF: Well, we pull so many Forces of the Empire club members here that's a big part of that group. I mean, there's like 50 people just playing in the blaster battle.

Aud: I think fandom just fragmented--

MW: That's true. Fandom did fragment and that's one reason why it's much more important for us to connect with other STAR WARS fans.

MF: When is Revelcon?

CC: It's mid-March. It's like spring break. The second or third weekend in March.

MW: --come on, join us!

Aud: I have my own pet philosophical theories about why STAR WARS split up. Used to be, a lot of people were wildly Han Solo fans but then they found out, alas and alack, Han Solo was not the center of the STAR WARS universe and they went kind of "blah!" and-- and okay, this is cool, we get it, and that's what happened. STAR WARS is also funny because it's not morally black and white, it's sort of like somewhere in the middle, it's making its own path and people have a hard time dealing with that. A lot of people got freaked out by JEDI because they thought Vader should be thrown up against the wall and plugged full of holes and Han was going to be the last of the Jedi or whatever. And it didn't turn out that way. It's so ambiguous.

Aud2: That's ironic because I think initially there were kind of presenting, STAR WARS was presented as being kind of black and white. And it's progressively gray.

Aud: STAR WARS got grayer with EMPIRE and then really gray with...

ZP: The second part [DARK FORCE RISING] with the full approval of--Luke Skywalker kneels in front of the Emperor and says, "I am going to join the Dark Side."

Aud: Yeah, we believe that.

ZP: Yeah, and I have some beachfront property in Arizona!

MW: Well, whatever the individual fan feels about STAR WARS is important to a certain degree and that's why we are a very large group with a very varied interpretation about what STAR WARS is and what it means to us, and, okay, I'm a dyed-in-the-banthafur Han fan--I love the lad, but I can also see the Luke things, I see all the other stories, Leia, there's some really far out stuff there. On all levels.

Tim: Fannish Roscharch test.

PG: Yeah.

MW: If we really like the idea of STAR WARS, we've got to work for the whole thing, not just--

Aud: And STAR WARS is interesting because, first of all, you've got to know your politics and your history. You have to really have a grasp on politics to follow it. I mean, STAR TREK, you throw out the politics and, who cares? It's just guys in a ship who fly around and have adventures. That's fine. But STAR WARS is very political. And, moral and philosophical and, there's all kinds of things going on.

Tina Bentrup:
Sort of getting back to what we were talking about before about other cons, for me, living from one MediaWest to another is really excruciating. I live down in Tennessee and I don't know any other STAR WARS fans within 200 miles. They're over in North Carolina ...but there are a lot of STAR WARS people in the D.C. area. I mean, that's one of the central East Coast locations. Wouldn't it be nice if we could all get together at the opposite end of the year from MediaWest?

CC: I know most fans are probably like I am, financially. You save all year to come to MediaWest. Who can go to twelve cons a year? I know I started going to Revelcon because Houston is relatively near to Dallas

and you can drive there. Like Ming and Kathy Agel came in this year from out of town and there were a couple of out of town people last year. And it's growing. There are more out of town people coming.

Aud: When is it?

CC: It's mid-March. Like spring break weekend. Around March 15th.

Aud: But if you spend all your money then, that's not much time to save--

MW: Well, it's a long ways from being a MediaWest. It's trying to develop itself as a zine con. It's doing a very good job.

CC: Yeah, it's a very, very small con.

MW: For instance, I live in Santa Barbara, California. The people out there are not coming to MediaWest in many cases for the simple reason that it's impossible; it costs too much. It's expensive to come here. If we could develop a smaller con out there--

JY?: Are you sure Bjo Trimble isn't running any cons out there?

MW: No, she hasn't been running anything out there for years. The closest thing we have to a really nice con out there is LosCon but it's a generalized con. Plus MediaWest has had fifteen years. And fifteen years from now, it may be like MediaWest.

CC: Revelcon's only been going for a couple of years. So I think they have about 200 people that come.

JY?: See the problem is having a con over a weekend when a lot of people can come. We used to have the STAR TREK cons over George Washington's birthday weekend. The last one wound up... Lincoln's birthday was celebrated at the same time so we had a five day convention. Which was a blowout con in '76 and we collapsed in a heap after that. But, yeah, you have to find a weekend. Right now, in New York, the wretched creeps that run Creation have Thanksgiving weekend. They have Thanksgiving Day weekend, which is a logical weekend in New York. Of course, they're always petrified they'll have a snowstorm.

CC: Well, that's what's nice about Revelcon. Houston is so far south it's almost tropical.

MW: It's a good location.

MF: And it's easy to fly into Houston. You can't fly non-stop into Lansing like you could there.

CC: This year Revelcon was held at a hotel that was just a stone's throw from the airport.

MF: They could fly right into Houston for real cheap.

CC: But, really, it's a fun little con and I would advocate anyone come who can. Since it is teeny-tiny with 200 or so, it's a real relaxacon and it's small enough to get everybody in one room and schmooze together if you want to.

PG: And it's like Melea said, MediaWest started out real tiny like that, too, and in fifteen years, that convention may be another MediaWest.

MF: And you can say, "I was there at the beginning."

CC: But I'll tell you, I have been very impressed. The art show is the quality--and I mean some of the same people--Barbara Fister-Liltz and Karen River--that come down to it. But even people you've never heard of have superior art in it. This year, the dealer's room was very big. I saw zines in there I had only ever heard of but had never actually seen. There was an incredible selection and not just STAR TREK and STAR WARS and DOCTOR WHO--every fandom you can think of was represented.

[This is an edited version of a tape transcription of one of the principal SW panels at this year's MediaWest. Many thanks to Tim Blaes for providing the tape and for the accompanying photos. I would like to state that none of the panelists have any connection with Revelcon and were only expressing their personal opinions. Anyone interested in learning more about Revelcon should contact Candace Pulleine, P. O. Box 980744, Houston, Texas 77098-0744, (713) 526-5625.]

MEDIAWEST*CON 12 REPORT

by Judith Yuenger

The hotel was very nice—actually much bigger than the old one. The staff were, at first, a little overwhelmed by the volume of people. Service in the hotel restaurant was slow! Outside of the restaurant, they did try very hard to please everyone. I talked to a lot of the staff and they were having a ball—guess several of them stayed after work to watch the goings on.

The dealer's room was a delight! Very large so that they had plenty of room to make aisles between the tables wide enough so that you weren't constantly crushed.

At the other hotel, they had all the first floor rooms for people dealing out of their rooms which was very convenient. They didn't have this here and I missed it. There were people dealing out of their rooms, but they were scattered all over the place. It seemed to me that there weren't as many of them as there were last year, although my mind may be playing me tricks because I bought 52 zines last year and 45 this year, so there must have been plenty of places to buy zines!

All of the rooms for the panels and meetings were very large and well ventilated. Last year, Forces of the Empire meetings (and most of the SW stuff) were held in a small airless room. Forces of the Empire rented a series of rooms that were just across from the hotel registration desk that was just great for their needs. They had a room which had sofas and a bar and that was the Cantina. They had several other rooms off that which they used for a silent auction and the Rebel Breakfast.

The blaster battle was great (I sat in the hall smoking and watching since a lot of it seemed to be outside my room). They had to quit because a guy down the hall from me complained because he was selling out of his room (and half the hallway). Seems he was worried about the stuff he had in the hallway.

The art auction was nice, although I don't think that they had as much nice stuff as they did last year. Still don't like their system much. There were a couple of things that I would have liked to have bid on but, with their rule of anything with more than 1 bid going to auction, I wouldn't bid on them because I don't want to spend my evening sitting at the auction. It just takes too darned long.

The masquerade was okay. One of the neatest costumes was a guy who had made a Borg costume complete with sounds and a speaker that allowed his voice to sound inhuman. Most of the best costumes that I saw weren't in the masquerade. One lady had a beautiful replica of a Victorian costume complete with parasol and hat and button boots. It was really beautiful!

Now to the best part! The STAR AWARDS. I did the announcing in the Corellian costume I had made. Then we played the music from the ceremony in SW and Melea Fisher (as Princess Leia) and Pat Grant (as an Imperial) marched in and up to where I was. We started with the 1990 awards. Since the winners had previously been announced, there were no surprises. Of course, the fun part of all this is that the audience really got into this and were making all sorts of comments. The last awards that were given for 1990 were to the three groups/clubs [SOUTHERN ENCLAVE, Forces of the Empire, and Sons and Daughters of the Force]. Pat was giving out the certificates and Melea was putting the medals around their necks. Of course, it was really funny when Melea put the medal around Pat's neck (for Forces of the Empire) and the audience went wild saying it was history in the making. Probably the only time that Princess Leia would give a medal to an Imperial! And, with that, Princess Leia tried to strangle the Imperial with the medal!

There was much anticipation for the 1991 awards, as no one but Arwen Rosenbaum (who printed the certificates) and I knew who the

winners were! It was sort of like Oscar night! From the list, I pretty much knew who was there and who wasn't. There were two winners at the con who didn't attend the ceremony and I tried hard to get them to come without coming right out and saying they had won an award! Melea won a medal for cover artist and Pat put the medal on her or at least tried to—her buns kept getting in the way! Everyone had a super time and half a dozen or so people came up to me and asked if I was going to make this a yearly thing!

I went into the dealer's room after the

banquet to give Kathy Agel and Pat Nussman their awards. Someone had already told Kathy and she nearly jumped over the table to hug me! Pat wasn't there but I gave her medal to her friend. It was nice to see the certificates adorning the tables of those who won and everyone wore their medals for the rest of the day.

Catherine Churko had said to me in a letter, "A good ritual is a tonic for the mind and spirit," and believe me, it was! I am hoping that it will give SW a shot in the arm and, of course, I hope that it will boot most people in the butt to vote for the 1992 awards!

1991 STAR AWARDS

- Best STAR WARS Zine: BRIGHT CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE #1 (Editor: Ming Wathne)
- Best Multi-Media Zine (containing SW): REMOTE CONTROL #1 (Editor: Kathryn Agel)
- Best Short Story: "Symphony for Whistlepipes and Drumlyophones" by Z. P. Florian (appearing in ANOTHER SKY... #1, edited by Melanie Guttierrez and Lorrie Cherry)
- Best Medium Story: "Whom the Gods Recall" by Pat Nussman and Jacqueline Taero (appearing in ANOTHER SKY... #1, edited by Melanie Guttierrez and Lorrie Cherry)
- Best Long Story: "Gathering Darkness" by Carolyn Golledge (appearing in BRIGHT CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE #1, edited by Ming Wathne)
- Best Illustration Artist: Melanie Guttierrez for her illustrations in ANOTHER SKY... #1
- Best Cover Artist: Melea Fisher for the cover of ON A CLEAR DAY YOU CAN SEE DAGOBAH #5
- Best Poem: "Interiors" by Rebecca Carey (appearing in BRIGHT CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE #1, edited by Ming Wathne)
- Letterzine/Newsletter: SOUTHERN ENCLAVE (Editor: Cheree Cargill)
- Miscellaneous: Maggie Nowakowska for a filk entitled "Play It Again, Han" appearing in BRIGHT CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE #1, edited by Ming Wathne)
-



Pat Grant, Ming Wathne, Melea Fisher



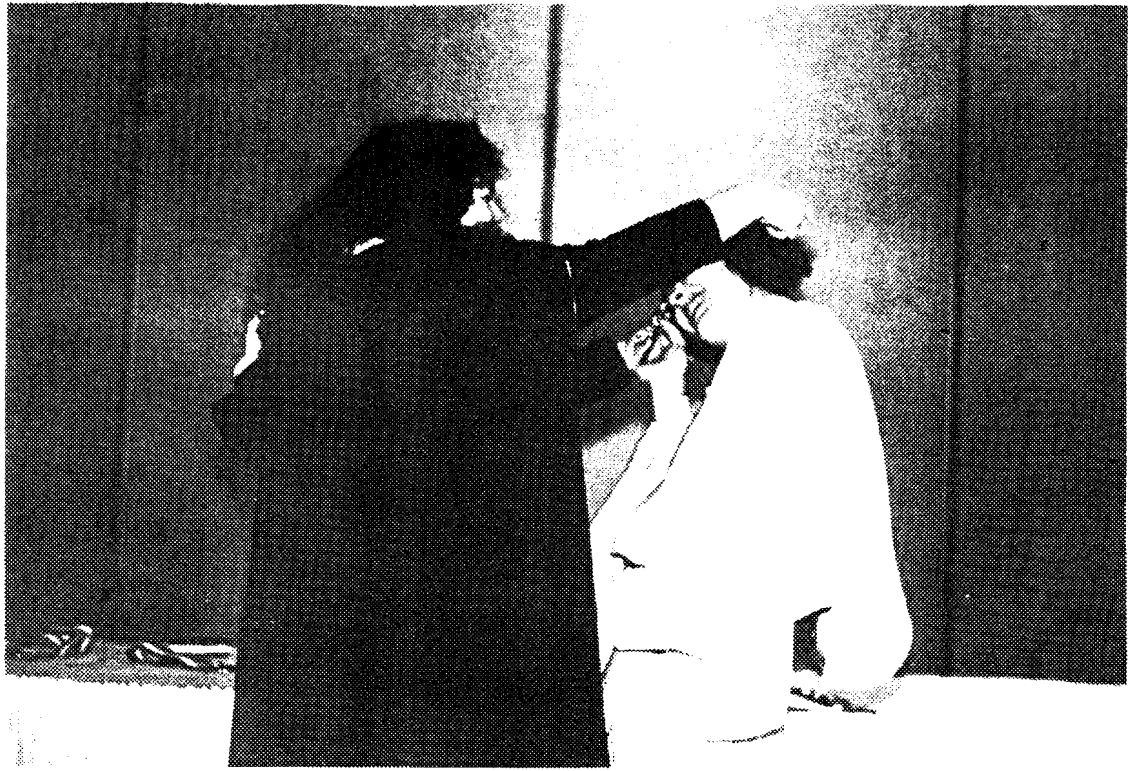
Pat Grant, Wanda Lybarger, Melea Fisher



Pat Grant, Carolyn Golledge, Melea Fisher



History in the Making!



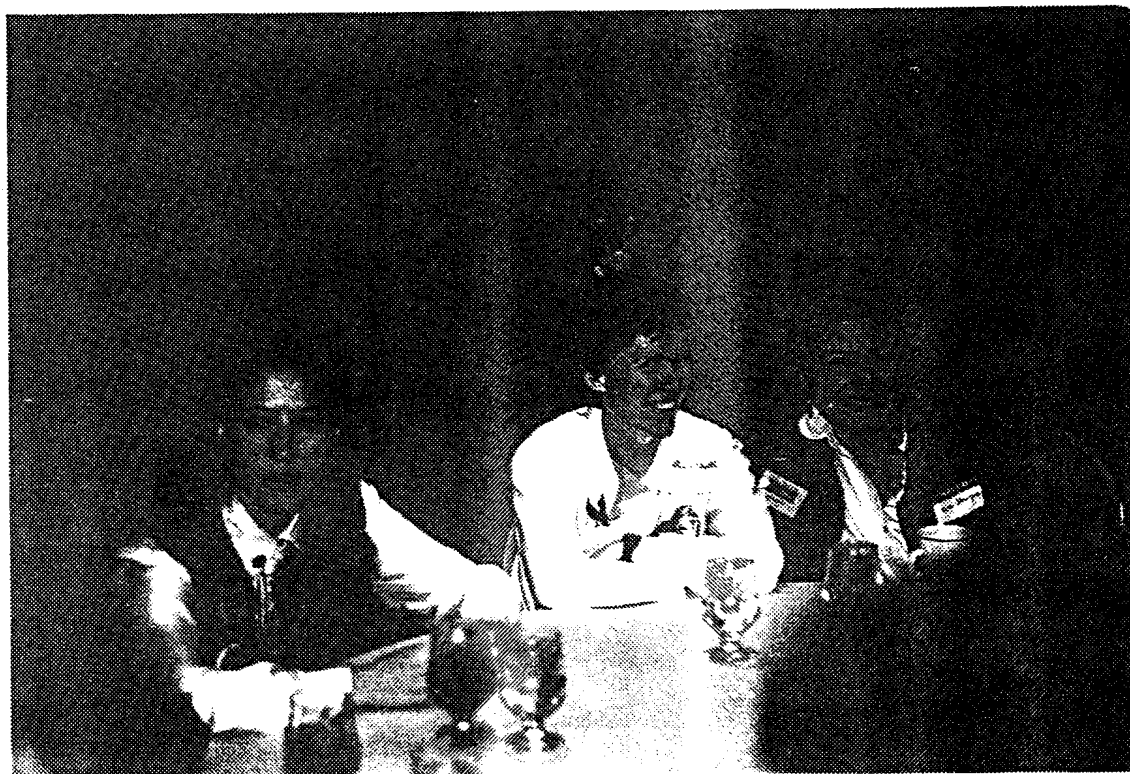
Princess Leia's buns get in the way!



Peace at last!

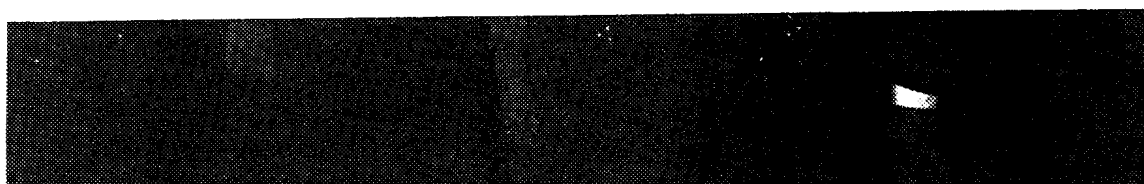


Melea Fisher, Carolyn Cooper



Barbara Anderson, Carolyn Golledge, Liz Sharpe

17



Samia Martz, Linda Billington, Ming Wathne

WHAT A CON!!

SE Wins 4th Fan Q, Two Star Awards!

What a great con MediaWest 12 was and what wonderful SW panels and activities! The First Annual STAR aWARDs was the highlight of the convention, as you can see from the photos in this issue. As bad as last year's MWC was, this year's was that good! The new hotel was spacious and accomodating; the rooms were bigger and each came complete with a small refrigerator and coffeemaker. While the service at the hotel restaurant was rather slow and the menu expensive, a special room service snack menu was offered with reasonable prices. The one time we tried it, service was amazingly fast and the food plentiful. There were also lots of restaurants within walking distance as well as two banks (for emergency cash transfusions via ATM machines) and a shopping center (including a large Target store).

Con facilities were very large and the dealers' room was big enough to accomodate all the dealers without having them spread out in various nooks and crannies, as had become prevalent at the old hotel. And there was plenty of room in the aisles so that you weren't swept along in a human tide. The art show room was almost too big for the amount of art. Panel rooms were big enough to hold a fair-sized gathering. The four panels I served on were all well-attended but no one felt crowded.

Of course, it wouldn't be MediaWest without a few screwups. At the last minute, the hotel refused to allow us to bring food into the Star Awards banquet and insisted that they cater it. We had a nice buffet of hamburgers and hot dogs, baked beans and potato salad, and it turned out that ours was the only catered affair at the whole con! For a mere \$3.00 (or more as donations were requested to cover the extra catering cost), it was the best deal at the con.

The annual blaster battle had to be cut short because of complaints by a dealer who was selling out of his room on that floor and by a woman who was trying to get her child to

sleep. Because the hotel is five stories tall, we would like to advocate to Gordon and Lori Carlton that next year separate floors be designated as a dealer's floor (because the room dealers were scattered throughout the hotel and difficult to find), a blaster battle floor, and a quiet floor for those who want no disturbances.

But overall it was a great convention and our efforts to unify SW fandom have made great strides since last year. Pat Grant related Lori Carlton's comment that the SW fans were now the largest organized group at MWC! Who says SW fandom is dead?

The Star Awards overshadowed the Fan Q's this year but I'm thrilled to report that SE won a fourth Fan Q for Best SW Letterzine. Thank you! A listing of other Fan Q winners is printed elsewhere in this issue. Congratulations to all the SE'ers who won in this and other fandoms.

Now I'd like to make a request for next year. Because SE has dominated the letterzine category for the last four years and won the 1991 Star Award as Best SW Letterzine, I am withdrawing SE from the Fan Q and Star Awards competition next year. BOUND BY THE FORCE, HIBERNATION SICKNESS and SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE FORCE are excellent publications and deserve the chance to collect some of those awards!

Two bits of information you might find interesting... James Casselbury reports in BOUND BY THE FORCE that he has found a company which sells SW costumes (among others) made to order. The address is: Superior Costumes, 225 East Ridge, Suite 4, Marquette, MI 49855.

And fans of THE YOUNG INDY CHRONICLES who want to express their support for the show should address their comments to: Mr. Robert Iger, President, ABC Entertainment, 2040 Avenue of the Stars, Los Angeles, CA 90067. And you all know the drill—be polite and don't put the name of the show on the envelope; it will be

forwarded to Lucas unopened.

On an unrelated topic... In a recent letter to me, A. G. Steyn asked that I make everyone aware that unedited versions of her stories that appeared in TREMOR #6 are available from her for a nominal (copying) charge. Please contact A. G. for more information.

And a note from me to everyone whom I owe letters, answers concerning stories, and orders for zines... Please bear with me! I'm typing as fast as I can! I have been working diligently over the last month to get all my mail answered. You WILL get an answer from me and/or your order as soon as humanly possible. The reasons my mail is so backlogged are extensive and unavoidable. They follow:

On Friday, May 1, I was called into a meeting with my boss and, without any warning whatsoever, abruptly fired from my job of six and a half months. Since I was extraordinarily happy there and thought everyone was fairly happy with the job I was doing, I could not have been more shocked if my boss had pulled a gun out of her desk and shot me! Her reasons boiled down to pure bullcrap (IMHO) and I could read between the lines enough to realize that the whole thing was politically motivated. For one thing, she stated that I was too "aggressive" in pursuing my job and that, I believe, is the operative word. As Randy put it, "You scared the shit out of her!"

But, what goes around comes around and less than a month later, my boss was herself fired just as abruptly! (Pardon me while I snicker sardonically...)

Anyway, it actually couldn't have come at a better time because I had just picked up the final group of pages on TF6 from the printer and for the next two and a half weeks, I spent several hours every day collating and binding this telephone-book-sized zine. I couldn't find anyone to help me until the last minute, so it took every bit of that time! I finished two days before we left for MediaWest.

We were gone for seven full days and then flaked out for a couple of days after we got back from our 2400 mile trip. The whole first week of June, I worked in the kitchen at my hometown church during Vacation Bible School (a tradition in southern churches during the summer months). It was a lot of fun but boy! what a chore! I've never poured so much Kool

Aid and handed out so many cookies in my life!

I had also sent out some resumes and had a couple of interviews and one resulted in my getting a new job at a small law firm as one of their two word processors. I started there June 22nd. I'm not as happy with it as I should be because it's just not as good a job as the one I was fired from. But, I have my own office and everyone there seems nice, the benefits are pretty good and I'm making the same salary, so things could be worse. I realize that I'm just still grieving over the severe ego-blow of my firing and the loss of a job I loved, so I'm hoping I will grow to like it better.

And we've been grieving for another reason. On May 9th, we were forced to say goodbye to our German shepherd, Thor. At the still comparatively young age of 10-1/2, he evidently suffered from a small stroke, the result being that he lost most of the muscle control in his hind legs and hips. There was no hope for his recovery and he was in obvious distress, so we made the hard decision to take that "final act of kindness," as someone put it. We had his body cremated and buried the little casket of his ashes in our backyard, marking the grave with a "Climbing Blaze" rose bush.

Thor was our loyal friend, our fierce protector and our loving companion. He was without a doubt the most intelligent dog I have ever met, a unique individual who will always have a special place in our memories. I still find myself expecting to find him under my desk as I type or sleeping beside my bed every night. I still expect to hear him rush the front door in challenge whenever the doorbell rings. Of all the dogs I have ever had, of all those yet to come into my life, Thor will stand out as special. He is sorely missed.

But we also have a new member of the family. On July 5, 1992, Smallwood's Dances With Wolves ("Wolf") came to live with us. He is a 9 week old German shepherd pup whose name is currently bigger than he is, but we think he'll soon grow into it! He's black and tan and scrappy as heck. He promises to be quite a character! I'll try to run a picture in a later issue.

Until next time, hope everyone is having a great summer!

1992 FAN Q AWARDS

(This list is not complete but consists of selected winners.)

BLAKE'S 7

Art: Susan Lovett
Editor: (tie) Jean Graham and Ann Wortham
Letterzine: HORIZON and NEUTRAL ARBITER, Pat Nussman, editor (tie)
Poem: "Evensong - Avon" by Jacqueline Taero
Zine: GAMBIT #7, Jean Graham, editor

MULTI-FANDOM

Letterzine: COMLINK, Allyson Dyar, editor
Short Story: "Disillusions" by Sharon Redding
Zine: REMOTE CONTROL, Kathryn Agel, editor

QUANTUM LEAP

Art: Kate Nuremburg
Editor: Kate Nuremburg
Letterzine: QUANTUM QUARTERLY, Jim Rondeau, editor
Novel: "Best of Two Worlds" by Sandy Hall
Poem: "Pulitzer Prize for Photography, 1970" by Jane Milander
Short Story: "Imagine" by Kate Nuremburg
Zine: PLAY IT AGAIN, Kate Nuremburg, editor

REAL GHOSTBUSTERS

Zine: THE VAMPIRE JANINE by Jeff and Mary Morris

STAR TREK

Art: Jean Kluge
Letterzine: DATA ENTRIES #13-14, Jim and Melody Rondeau, editors
Novel: "Pirate of Avalon" by Terry Dusewellin
Poem: "Borg" by Daphne Van Owen
Short Story: "The Vulcan Prophecy" by Paulie Taylor
Zine: ERIDANI #12, Randall Landers, editor

STAR WARS

Art: Wanda Lybarger
Letterzine: SOUTHERN ENCLAVE, Cheree Cargill, editor
Short Story: "The Bequest" by Pat Nussman

VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM ON THE SEA

Art: Jean McClure
Zine: BELOW THE SURFACE #4, Kathryn Agel, editor

BULLETIN BOARD

CONGRATULATIONS TO ...

George Lucas for winning the prestigious Irving Thalberg Award this year at the Academy Awards for outstanding achievement in motion pictures.

Karen Ripley on the sale of a trilogy to Del Rey Books. The first book, tentatively titled *THE PERSISTENCE OF MEMORY* will be out in November '93, with the second book out in spring of '94, and the third in the fall of '94.

Auriette Hahn on her marriage to Tim Lindsey on May 16, 1992. Her new address is:

Auriette Hahn Lindsey
7222 Anna Avenue #12
Maplewood, MO 63143

Judith Yuenger on the birth of her granddaughter, Kelli Lynn Olifirowicz, born February 28, 1992. She weighed 8 lbs., 11 oz., and was 21" long. She is Judy's third grandchild and first granddaughter.



ARTISTS/AUTHORS EXCHANGE

LOOKING FOR ARTISTS, Authors, Poets, Puzzle makers for *BRIGHT CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE* #3. SASE to Ming Wathne, 437 Via Roma, Santa Barbara, CA 93110 for publishing outline.

IS ANYONE INTERESTED in contributing Indiana Jones stories for a new issue of *FIELD STUDIES*? Looking for adventure, romance and originality from any period in Indy's life. SASE Cheree Cargill, 457 Meadowhill, Garland, TX 75043.

LOOKING FOR CONTRIBUTIONS for "A-Cross the Force", a SW cross-universe zine. SASE Tim Blaes, Rt. 6, Box 294, Hendersonville, NC 28792.

CLUBS

Forces of the Empire
c/o Pat Grant
2371 N. Aurelius, Apt. 12
Holt, MI 48842

Sons and Daughters of the Force
c/o Carolyn Frodsham
913 S. Grand Avenue #44
San Jacinto, CA 92382

Stephen Nelmes
U.K. Star Wars Fan Club
8 Victoria Close, Thornbury
Bristol, Avon B512 1JE
Great Britain.

PENPALS WANTED

Karen Finch
5C4 Candlewyck Park Apts.
Candlewyck Drive
Ithaca, NY 14850

ERRATA

The address for Poison Pen Press is:

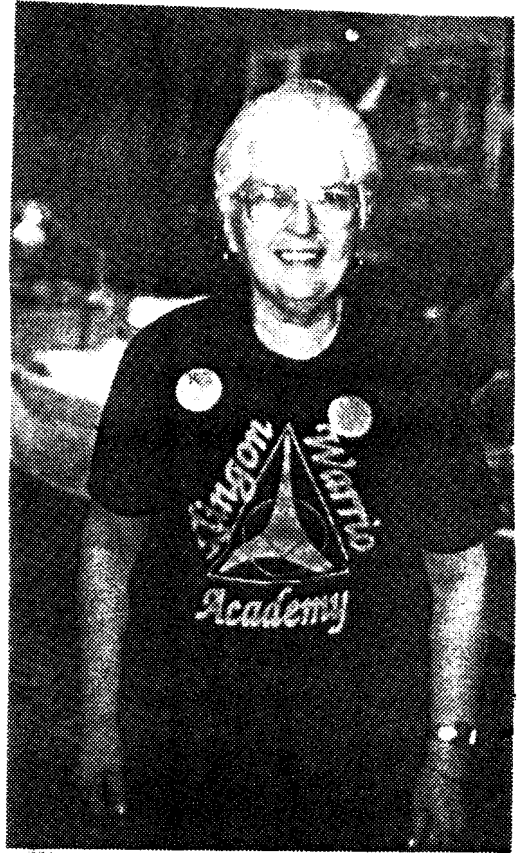
Poison Pen Press
c/o Devra Langsam
627 East 8th St.
Brooklyn, NY 11218

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Taken at Revelcon, March 13-15, 1992



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NOTE: Due to the size of this issue, the clippings section has been dropped. It will return next time. Thanks to everyone who sent clippings—we'll try to get them all into future issues.

Editor and Publisher:

Cheree T. Cargill
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Deadline for #33 -- September 1, 1992

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SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED LATER THAN SEVEN (7) DAYS AFTER DEADLINE WILL NOT BE PRINTED IN THIS ISSUE!