



ISSUE 45

SUMMER 1996

TELEPHONE COURTESY OR HOW TO MAKE ENEMIES WITHOUT EVEN TRYING

Susan M. Garrett

Most fannish business is conducted by mail or in person. This is by unspoken agreement between fanzine readers, contributors, and editors. Fandom could probably continue quite well had Mr. Alexander Graham Bell never been born, albeit with a lot more money spent on postage. The rules for telephone usage are quite simple. The most important thing to remember is that phoning is a privilege, not a right.

When should I use the phone to call an editor, or a writer, or an artist, or anyone?

If you are one of those people who cannot express themselves well in writing or wait for a written response, you may ask someone for permission to phone them. You do this by writing to them and asking them for their permission to call, the correct number or extension if permission is granted, and when they would be free to accept your call. If you are polite and responsible and mention *why* you feel you need to talk to them over the phone, they may give you permission to use their number.

If the person does not want you to call them under any circumstances, be willing to take "no" for an answer and do

not take the rejection personally. Many people cannot accept calls at business locations, others feel that their home number is a private line for friends, families and emergencies, and others may have relatives at home who would be disturbed by the phone ringing. If the someone says "no", accept it and do not pursue the matter any further.

I don't want to bother writing because I want an answer right away, so should I go to directory assistance and get someone's number?

NO. Never ever go to directory assistance for a number, no matter what your question and/or concern unless the person has previously given you their number and permission and you have possibly mislaid it. If you were not given permission to use their number, you do not have the right to go to directory assistance to ask for a number. A common argument is that people who do not wish to be disturbed usually have their number unlisted but this is no longer the case — many people don't bother having their number protected because such protection is now

circumvented by the telephone company selling even unlisted numbers to businesses and what-not. If you use directory assistance, expect the person to hang up on you. I would.

Can I give a friend someone's number, if I've got permission to use it?

NO. A telephone number given to you for your use should never be given out to other people unless permission has been received for the other person. Again, a commercial business may advertise its number and those numbers are perfectly free to be passed around, but the telephone number of an editor or contributor or fan is a private number and should not be given without that person's consent. Fandom is not a business.

If I have permission, what time should I call?

Arrange this with the person you are calling when you ask for their number — it's only polite. As a rule, never call a home telephone number during the early morning, before 10:00 a.m., or after 9:00 p.m. at night. Keep in mind that it is very disturbing to receive a call when you've just settled down to your dinner and paper, or you've just put the baby to sleep and the phone wakes him again, or you're awakened out of a sound sleep by the telephone. Also remember that some fans live with their families or with friends and that a number may have many extensions, some of which may be in a bedroom or nursery.

What about emergency phone calls or collect calling?

Two major no-no's. Never call collect unless you've arranged it beforehand. And never break in on someone's call unless the situation is a genuine emergency ... and knowing how many copies of a zine are left or the status of an order are NOT emergencies. Letting a fan know that another fan has just suffered a major accident or that a family member is in trouble could be an emergency. Try to draw on some common sense, or you may make an enemy for life.

When should I NOT phone someone?

The list could run for three or four days, but here are some major abuses.

- Do *not* phone someone when you want to know what issues of a fanzine are available.

- Do *not* phone someone when you want to know when a zine is going to print.

- Do *not* phone someone when you want to know why you haven't gotten a contributor's copy or your order if your friend has gotten theirs.

- Do *not* phone someone when you want to know if it's too late to submit something to a zine.

- Do *not* phone someone when you want to know if someone would like to contribute to a zine.

- Do *not* phone someone when you want to know if an artist or writer is on deadline and you haven't gotten their permission to use their number.

- Do *not* phone someone when you want to know if an issue of a fanzine contains certain material.

- Do *not* phone someone when you want to know about fan clubs or fanzines in the area.

And always keep in mind that writing is a good deal cheaper than phoning!

Who CAN I call?

Conventions and fan clubs usually have someone who is prepared to answer phone calls for the purposes of information and troubleshooting. It is considered rude to call collect unless they give you permission, and don't be surprised if they won't accept the charges. Remember that a fan club may sponsor a fanzine, but a fanzine does not always mean that a club is involved. If you have questions, *write* to the club or convention — if they've got their act together, they'll probably answer you as soon as possible as well as give you a telephone number to contact if you ask. And if you'd like them to phone you ... give them permission to use *your* number.

What can I do if someone is calling me without permission and consistently hassling me?

There are people who ignore common courtesy and common sense and will abuse the privilege of phoning — calling at all hours, phoning without permission, leaving messages with parents and siblings about drawing pornographic illos, etc. Tell them quite simply and politely that you do not appreciate their rudeness and that you are not available, then *hang up*. Most people will take the hint.

Some people, however, are so brain damaged that such subtleties will not pierce their thick grey cells. You do have several options, depending on how extreme you feel the situation is. If you have an answering machine, and you feel it's worth the bother, use it to screen your incoming calls until the person takes the hint and goes away.

Simply changing your number is an option, but in reality there's nothing simple about it. Do you really want to have to contact everyone who you wish to have your number and notify them of the change, simply because of someone else's lack of intelligence? If the situation has become that extreme, you are well within your rights to contact the telephone company's business office — or your local police. Recurring unwanted calls are considered harassment and if you know who is calling and from where, the police can do something about it.

Your telephone directory should contain instructions on who to contact for help if you're receiving harassing, threatening, or obscene phone calls. Keep in mind the difference between annoying and psychotic — that should help you determine what help you need. Such measures may seem excessive, but remember that the person who hassles you will probably continue to hassle other people in self-absorbed ignorance unless someone stops them.

Conclusion

The telephone, as well as any communications medium, should be used with courtesy — this applies to editors, writers, artists, readers, and basically anyone old enough to pick up a phone and dial a number. If you don't have

written permission to use a number, don't use other ways of finding that person's number. Arrange a convenient time to talk to them if they do give you permission and never call collect unless arranged beforehand — permission does not include the right to be rude.

MediaWest Con Report

Judith Yuenger

This year's MediaWest was different from others that I have attended in the past. It seemed to be more of a Relaxacon than anything else. There was still the Dealer's Room feeding frenzy although this year it didn't seem to be quite so frenzied. There seemed to be fewer dealers this year — many that I'd seen for years seemed to be missing. There were very few room dealers this year. We usually make several room runs a day and this time only made one or two during the entire con.

The panels also seemed to be less attended than in past years. I don't know if this was caused by apathy or fewer people attending the con. I do know that they had a sign at the hotel registration saying that they had rooms available. Panels included "Do we really need to see the first trilogy?", "Writers and Artists Workshop", "Fandom Intro Gen", "The Collectible Card Game", "Obi-Wan — Protective martyr or manipulative liar?", and "Do the pro novels fit into the fannish universe?"

SW zines that debuted here were *A Tremor in the Force* #9, *Bright Center of the Universe* #6, *Elusive Lover* (from Germany), *Flip of a Coin* #17 (Harrison Ford), *The Force of Fate* (novel), *I Have a Bad Feeling About This* #2 (from Scotland), *Sarlaac* (from Sweden), *Snowfire* #2, *The Sacrifice* (a reprint of stories), *Tales From the Cantina* #3, and *Tales of a New Republic* #2.

The STAR aWARDs were well attended and were held in the Imperial Room courtesy of the Forces of the Empire. I'd like to thank them for the use of their facility. The medals and certificates were presented by the lovely Oola (who used her tentacles to good advantage). Thanks, Oola. A SW Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Cheree Cargill. When I first got into SW, it was considered a "dying fandom." Cheree was still printing *A Tremor in the Force* and *Southern Enclave*. SE was one of the few places where SW fans could discuss their favorite topic. She has done much to keep SW fandom going and this was

the recognition that she so justly deserves. Thanks, Cheree. I was also given a medal and certificate for "Outstanding Contributions to SW Fandom." (I know who instigated this and I'm going to *kill* you!!!) Seriously, it was a lovely gesture and I can't tell you how much I appreciated it. Thanks from the bottom of my heart. It is proudly displayed in my home.

It was a good con. This time we seemed to have more time to spend sitting around and actually talking to people, not only catching up on the latest news from everyone but discussing our favorite topic of conversation — *Star Wars*.

A Note from Cheree:

I want to thank you all sincerely for the SW Lifetime Achievement Award with which I was presented at the STAR aWARDs. I was taken totally by surprise and rendered absolutely speechless!

I really don't deserve this honor. Without the support and continued contributions of active fans, SW fandom would indeed have died. There are many, many people who should share in this award for keeping SW fandom alive and well even during the years when it seemed to be fading away — Maggie Nowakowska, Wanda Lybarger, Paula Truelove and Jenny McAdams (publishers of *Flip of a Coin*), Pat Nussman, Jacqueline Taero, Nancy Stasulis, Mary Jean Holmes, Tim Blaes, Matthew Whitney, Pat Grant and the Forces of the Empire group, Mark and Melea Fisher, and others too numerous to name. All these folks should be sharing this award, for they too kept SW fandom alive and kicking.

So, while I am proud and delighted to display the award I received and will cherish it, I will never forget that it does not belong solely to me. Every one of you has a part of it and SW fandom would not be what it is today without the dedication of every SW fan out there. Thank you!

THE STAR AWARDS

SW Zine:

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

Imperium #5* — Editor: Arwen RosenbaumOn a Clear Day You Can See Dagobah #8* — Editors: Mark and Melea Fisher*Bright Center of the Universe #5* — Editor: Ming Wathne*The Rest of the Garbage #1* — Editor: Z. P. Florian**Multi-Media Zine****Containing SW:*****Texas Revelations #2* — Editor: Candace Pulleine****Foreign SW Zine:**

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

The Ormand Factor* — Editor: Louise TurnerBounty Hunter #5* — Editor: James Simmonds*Alliance* — Editor: Cavell Gleeson**Newsletter/Letterzine:**

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

Southern Enclave* — Editor: Cheree CargillBound by the Force* — Editor: Pat Grant*Trilogy Times of New Jersey* — Editor: Jim Lavin**Vignettes - 1-3 pgs:**

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

“Reversal of Fortune” by Mary Jo Fox (*I Don’t Care What You Smell #1*)**Short Stories - 4-10 pgs:**

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

“Of Time & Regret” by Veronica Wilson (*On a Clear Day... #8*)**Medium Stories - 11-29 pgs:****“Rancor Delivery” by Z. P. Florian (*I Don’t Care What You Smell #1*)**

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

Long Stories - 30+ pgs:

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

“Between the Lines” by Susan Zahn (*On a Clear Day You Can See... #8*)**Novels:**

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

“Lair of the Blue Falcon” by J. A. Berger**Filks:**

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

“Ballad of the Bankrupt Fan” by Jacqueline Taero (*I Don’t Care What You Smell #1*)**Poems:**

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

Hon. Men:

“O Bothans! My Bothans!” by Liz Sharpe (*I Don’t Care What You Smell #1*)

Miscellaneous:	A. G. Steyn for Cartoons in <i>I Don't Care What You Smell</i> #1
Hon. Men:	Gerald Crotty for cartoons in <i>I Don't Care What You Smell</i> #1
Hon. Men:	Wanda Lybarger for cartoons in <i>I Don't Care What You Smell</i> #1
Hon. Men:	Sheryl Haven for "Corellian Tech Courses" (<i>I Don't Care What You Smell</i> #1)
Cover Artist:	Gerald Crotty for the front cover of <i>The Ormand Factor II</i>
Hon. Men:	A. G. Steyn for the back cover of <i>I Don't Care What You Smell</i> #1
Hon. Men:	Marla Fair for the front cover of <i>Imperium</i> #5
Hon. Men:	Melea Fisher for the back cover of <i>On a Clear Day You Can See Dagobah</i> #8
Illustration Artist:	Melea Fisher for illos in <i>Imperium</i> #5 and <i>On A Clear Day You Can See Dagobah</i> #8
Hon. Men:	Wanda Lybarger for <i>Imperium</i> #5, <i>Dagobah</i> #8, and <i>Bright Center of the Universe</i> #5
Hon. Men:	Gerald Crotty for <i>The Ormand Factor II</i> and <i>I Don't Care What You Smell</i> #1
Hon. Men:	Nancy Stasulis for <i>I Don't Care What You Smell</i> #1

REVIEWING THE FLEET

City of Bones by Martha Wells.

Reviewed by Z. P. Florian

The second pro novel of Martha Wells hit the bookstores. Titled *City of Bones*, it's the kind of book that helps hard core SW fans survive until the next trilogy comes out. Also recommended as a healing device to those who suffered serious psychological injuries while reading pro SW novels. Obligatory reading for every deeply committed Han fan. All other organic beings should read it just because it's a good book. It draws you into a beautifully drawn, hauntingly real and fully imaginary universe. It draws you in so well that, after a few pages, you will actually live in the eight-tiered city, know the people in it. You will share precious water with them, sleep in the corner of their room, walk on their streets as you climb to the top tiers of this marvelous city to see its rulers and prevent the impending disaster...

The main character is what I'd call an alternative Han Solo, somewhat less confident, but that's understandable if you consider that the most valuable assets of the man are his bones, which can be sold as fortune-telling trinkets. But there is the talent for improvisation, the honor, the speech patterns, that make him a viable incarnation of the intrepid Corellian. We all know what splendid Han Martha Wells

can write.

There is a good plot, the kind you can't put down, adventure, excitement, and Holmesian investigation pulling you deeper into the events. For those who appreciate it, there are breathtaking descriptions of alien architecture and art — no, not the long-winded boring kind, not at all — and intricate relationships between characters with the underlying questions of trust, ambition and love ... almost. The "almost" part of it is especially valuable, considering that most authors would simply let the two main characters fall into each others' arms and ride off into the sunset. The climax of the book is unique and about as dizzying as the X-wing flight over the Death Star. By the time you read this, it should be out in paperback in the SF section of your bookstore. And when you're done reading it, join me in a solemn prayer for a sequel. Especially one that also features her rather Anakinesque "villain".

For those who missed it, the first pro novel of Martha Wells is *The Element of Fire*. Far less starwarsy than *City of Bones*, more in the wizardry vein, but also a pleasure to read.

CHARACTER BIOGRAPHY

Compiled by Judith Yuenger
from the SW Screen Saver by LucasArts
(Two or three of these biographies will be printed in every issue)

NAME: WEDGE ANTILLES
SEX: MALE
RACE: CORELLIAN
HEIGHT: 1.71 meters

Wedge grew up around freighters and starships. His parents managed a fueling station off the last planet in the Gus Treta system. They were used to dealing with both pirates and the police, as it usually wasn't over a very serious matter. But one fatal day while Wedge was away at upper division schooling, a smuggler got spooked while refueling and blasted free from the hanger without releasing the shiplock couplings. The ship and the station went up in flames.

When Wedge learned of this, he abandoned any aspirations he may have had kicking around, and used the insurance money to buy a stocklight freighter of his own. He knew stardrives and repulsor lift mechanics and modified the ship to serve his own purposes. He wanted his ship to be good enough to earn him money legitimately. He wanted work amongst the minority, the honest businessman. But this was a fruitless dream, as the money made honestly was not enough to sustain him. He had to resort to smuggling.

He made sure that if he was going to become a pirate, it would be for a noble cause, and the Rebellion seemed more than noble. It was admirable. He began by running arms to the Rebel outposts throughout the galaxy, learning of more and more atrocities committed by the Empire. He had a fair number of run-ins with Imperial fighter craft, where he proved himself to be an indispensable fighter pilot. Since then, he has flown escort sorties for Rebel convoys and surveillance ships.

NAME: BIGGS DARKLIGHTER
SEX: MALE
RACE: HUMAN
HEIGHT: 1.83 METERS

Born to wealthy food merchants on Tatooine, Biggs was raised with more advantages than most of his friends. In fact, it tended to keep him from making friends. His father gave him everything he could want, in the hopes of occupying the time he didn't spend with his son. But money is no substitute for a father's love.

Biggs started spending more and more time in Anchorhead with others his age. Many of them kept distant, allowing their parents' opinion of his father to taint their opinion of him. But Luke Skywalker was raised to judge by one's merit. The two became steadfast friends and pushed each other through unspoken competition. They raced T-16's through Beggar's Canyon, dreaming of the day the two of them would join the Imperial Academy. Their plan was to serve their time for the Imperial Navy then go into partnership in a starshipping route. But when the time came, Luke had to stay behind to help on the farm while Biggs' father got his son enrolled with benefits.

After a sterling training record, Biggs graduated with honors. His first assignment was as first mate to the frigate *Rand Ecliptic*. He had a little time before his tour was to begin, though, so he returned to Tatooine long enough to update Luke on his plans. While he was at the Academy, Biggs met a circle of Rebel sympathizers who brought him into their ranks. The group of them were going to jump ship and join the Alliance and he hoped one day Luke would be able to find them.

After turning AWOL, Biggs and the other Rebels made their way to Massassi station on Yavin IV by smuggling routes. There he served the Rebellion proudly until his heroic death in the Battle of Yavin.



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GET WELL SOON TO...

Pat Grant who had surgery on March 28 to remove a disc in her neck. By the time this issue sees print, Pat will know if she must have more surgery in May. Our thoughts and prayers are with you! Keep us posted!

CLUBS

Forces of the Empire
c/o Pat Grant
2343 N. Cedar St., Apt. A
Holt, MI 48842

ERRATA...

From: M. J. Mink

Did you know there's an online SW fanfic newsletter? They've printed two issues reviewing and giving info on online stories, and the third issue is supposed to have an

article about zines. Tracy Duncan (no, not THAT Tracy Duncan) is the editor, and she'd like to have more zine people involved — she says most of their online subscribers aren't aware of zines!

If you'd like to be put on her mailing list, her AOL address is: Dunc397@AOL.com. The two back issues of the newsletter are posted at:

<http://members.aol.com/dunc397/cpov.html>

From: Lisa Cowan

News bits:

According to Hollywood columnist Marilyn Beck, a nationwide casting search will soon be underway for a young man to play Anakin Skywalker. Also being sought is a "young Queen" — a teenage girl who can convey the wisdom and poise of a natural ruler, and who also shows promise of blossoming into a sensual exotic beauty. Pretty tall call!

Every movie studio around would love to distribute the next SW films, but my sources tell me that 20th Century Fox has the first crack at an offer. And like they'd refuse, right?

It is a good bet that George Lucas will direct at least the first of the new SW films. He will be very closely involved with all three. Also John Williams has already been asked to compose the music.

The date for the release of the Special Edition, digitally enhanced SW movie has been set as February 21, 1997. Lucas and 20th Century Fox are negotiating deals to enhance and re-release both TESB and ROTJ. No details or dates on those re-releases yet.

George Lucas has finished most of his work on the scripts for the next SW movies and he is now working on a script for a fourth Indiana Jones film to star Harrison Ford and to be directed by Steven Spielberg.

Mark Hamill also has a new active fan club. It is run by Sally Sparkman, who also handles his fan mail and autograph requests. The address is: The Mark Hamill International Fan Club, P. O. Box 1051, Santa Monica, CA 90406.

Steve Sansweet, SW collector and author, has been given the job of "Star Wars Ambassador" by George Lucas. Steve will be leaving his post as bureau chief for the *Wall Street Journal*, for what he describes as a "dream job." He will be attending as many SF cons as possible providing information on all of Lucasfilm's SW and Indiana Jones plans, including the re-release of SW in 1997, the multimedia release of *Shadows of the Empire*, and the

upcoming new Trilogy.

Due to the unending popularity of the NPR SW and TESB radio dramas, the third movie, ROTJ, is at last being produced as a radio drama. At this time, none of the original ROTJ cast will be lending their voices to do their roles.

George Lucas was on the cover of the March 1996 *Forbes* magazine, with an interesting article about Lucas and his own empire inside.

Artist Dave Dorman has been commissioned to create a series of portraits of the SW universe's most popular characters. The first portrait, Obi-Wan Kenobi, was due out in March.

Old News but fun stuff:

ILM made up a t-shirt for the cast and crew during the filming of ROTJ with their answer to the Ewoks as cute teddy bears: 3 ferocious looking Ewoks, one in a hang glider carrying a missile, one about to depress the plunger on a dynamite detonator, and the third pointing a machine gun at the viewer. Caption reads: "DAMN RIGHT WE'RE CUTE!"

A t-shirt that Lucasfilm made up for the cast and crew of ROTJ: Yoda with his ears standing straight up, his eyes crossed and his body encased in a strait-jacket, saying, "Hold up well under pressure I do."

A Personal Statement

by Nora Mayers

Cheree has graciously allowed me to venture outside the SW universe to offer a brief tribute to the gracious gentleman whose praises I've been singing for the past two issues. Eugene Curran Kelly (better known to his fans as Gene Kelly) passed out of our lives on February 2, 1996, and we are made poorer. This Irish-American original, with the unbeatable Technicolor smile, brought such happiness and joy to so many for so many years that anything I write will inevitably seem inadequate. How does one write an obituary for a man who made beautiful music (and dance!) with a cartoon mouse, and who did it so wonderfully that we believed it might just be real? He splashed through a rain storm and made the whole world's spirits soar. He danced through the streets of Paris and into the paintings of Van Gogh, Renoir, and Lautrec, transporting us with him, and making us believe in the spell he wove with his unique form of dance and his mischievous charm.

Gene was an original who invented an American dance style culled from tap, modern dance, ballet and gymnastics (usually all in one routine). As a reviewer for *The Washington Post* put it: "His joyful, brawny and exuberant choreography spoke of ballet and the athletic field, yet made him seem like Everyman." He danced like a hurricane, and unlike so many male dancers before and since, did it with such powerful masculinity and electric sensuality that, in the

style he created, he has never been equaled. Mikhail Barishnikov said, "We don't have dancers like Gene Kelly anymore." We don't have many people like him at *all* anymore. He was generous of heart and spirit, powerfully masculine without having to push to prove it, uniquely gifted as a dancer, choreographer, actor, smokey-voiced singer, and director. Creative genius, technical innovator, brilliant teacher. He was all of these things and so many more.

Mr. Kelly died at the age of 83, but no matter how old he became, he was young. Until the series of strokes that eventually claimed him, he remained creative ("Cats Don't Dance", with choreography by Mr. Kelly, will be in theaters this summer). He remarried at age 78 to a young woman who loved him deeply and he continued to exhaust those around him with his indefatigable energy. Despite complications from the strokes, he died in his sleep with his wife sitting beside his bed. Thank God for his peaceful passing.

I am deeply grieved but it is impossible to mourn while watching him sing and dance in the rain. I find myself smiling — even laughing — at his exuberance and abundant charm. Thank you, Mr. Kelly, for all you've left behind. Much love to you, sir, and more appreciation than I can adequately express.

Special News Release for those on the GENie Information Network

The following news release was sent to me by Martha Wells and should be of interest to anyone who is a subscriber to GENie.

GENie Owners Default On Payments; Shutdown Feared

ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND, U.S.A., 1996 JUN 28 (NB) -- Yovelle Renaissance Corporation has defaulted on its payments to General Electric Information Services (GEIS) for its purchase of Genie, GEIS has taken steps to block Yovelle's collection of credit card charges, and concern is mounting that the online service could shut down within weeks.

Yovelle Renaissance Corporation purchased Genie from GEIS in January of this year, agreeing to an undisclosed series of payments to purchase the online service from GEIS. The first payment was made but no payments have been made since.

Yovelle Renaissance's owners have attempted to renegotiate the sale with GEIS without success, arguing that they shouldn't pay the full price since subscriber numbers have dropped since the sale. One insider pegs the current subscriber numbers at 10,000 - 15,000.

GEIS, in turn, has taken steps to block Yovelle's receipt of credit card payments, placing an injunction on Yovelle's ability to collect charges through Checkfree, the company with which Yovelle and GEIS had contracted to handle subscriber renewals and payments. The situation makes it difficult for Yovelle to collect any more money from subscribers until this situation is resolved, Newsbytes was told.

Yovelle, meanwhile, has stopped work on Genie Interactive, the planned reincarnation of Genie on the Internet, announced shortly after the purchase of Genie from GEIS, according to two reliable sources inside the company. The placement of Genie on the Web was originally a GEIS project, code-named "The Village," before the company was sold.

Jeff Rochwarger, Genie president, "has been reassigned," according to two sources. He can now be found at IDT, which stands for (Interactive Discount Telecom), Hackensack, NJ, a company which some say had a role in the creation of Yovelle Renaissance when negotiations to purchase Genie were underway. IDT operates Internet and telecom services and has 420 employees, Newsbytes was told.

Rochwarger, and IDT President Howard Jonas, were not

available for comment, but Yovelle attorneys, Lawrence Cohen and Jim Courter spoke to Newsbytes.

"We claim there was a misrepresentation by General Electric to Yovelle," said Cohen, referring to the reason for the nonpayments to GEIS. "A letter was sent by Yovelle to GEIS setting forth their allegations."

He added, "This is nothing more than a legal dispute, not a matter of just not paying the bill."

The attorneys claim there were misrepresentations by GEIS in the number of subscribers to Genie, and in the contract as to the right of GEIS to use Genie in "other world markets."

"Apparently they are, and we dispute it," said Cohen.

Asked what this meant in court, Cohen replied, "This is a relatively new dispute at this moment and we can't comment on what is going to happen in reference to court procedure. We hope we can resolve this thing without litigation."

As for concerns the dispute will force a shutdown of Genie, he said, "We vehemently deny that."

Currently Genie has about 29 employees, down from 49 when Genie was purchased by Yovelle.

Inside Genie, sources say, the situation has invoked fear and concern. Employees are being paid, as are information providers, but as one source told Newsbytes: "It's questionable what the future will hold. Benefits are still being paid. We have had no news in a week. The only information we get is when we demand it. People are all looking for jobs. Morale is at its lowest."

Yovelle may have contributed to the lower subscriber numbers, sources say. The company raised prices "the first day they were in business." The original cost of subscribing to Genie was \$8.95 per month for 4 hours free and hourly charges were extra. The cost was raised with three new pricing plans: \$23.95 per month with 9 free connect hours and additional access at \$2.75 per hour; a \$29.00 plan with unlimited Internet access and no free hours on Genie, all Genie hours costing \$2.75 per hour; and an \$18.95 plan in which 9 hours were free and hourly access after that was \$2.75 per hour.

GEIS manager, public affairs, John Berry told Newsbytes, that the company only has this to say: "GE vehemently denies that there was any misrepresentation in connection with the sale of Genie. We have fully lived up to all our obligations."

(Wendy Woods/19960628) [ISMAP]

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New Subscription Rates Go Into Effect

The price for *Southern Enclave* — \$7.00 per issue — has remained the same for the past several years. Now, however, due to rising production and postage costs, I have been forced to raise the price by \$1.00 per issue. Beginning with this issue, the new prices will be \$8.00 per issue, \$24.00 for 3 issues, or \$32.00 for four issues. I regret having to take this step, but this has been necessary in order for SE to pay for itself. One person asked me if I couldn't just find a cheaper place to print it. Believe me, I've found one of the lowest cost print shops in Dallas and they give me a volume discount because of the amount of work I bring them. I've got production values cut to bare minimum, figuring that you would rather pay for content than frills. But the Post Office isn't giving me any discount and the print shop has to pay for paper and toner, so there's just so much I can do. I regret raising prices but there it is.

It was great to see so many SEers at MWC this year. You'll find some photos scattered through these pages that give you a feel for who all was there. Just to drop a few names — Kathy Agel, Barbara Anderson, Rose Arnold, Linda Billington, Tim Blaes, Rebecca Carey, Z. P. Florian, Carolyn Golledge, Pat Grant, Sheryl Haven, Carol Hines-Stroede, Debbie Kittle, Wanda Lybarger, Mickey Malkin, Samia Martz, M. J. Mink, Jennifer Moore, Pat Nussman, Barbara Peake, Cheryl Pryor, Arwen Rosenbaum, Sharon Saye, Marti Schuller, Liz Sharpe, Nancy Stasulis, Louise Turner, Mary Urhausen, Ming Wathne, Jeannie Webster, Veronica Wilson, Judy Yuenger, and Sue Zahn. Welcome to Judith Klinger who came over from Germany! There was a real international feel this year with Louise Turner from Scotland and Carolyn Golledge from Australia also there!

If you were there and I didn't see you or include your name on this list, wave at everyone and let me know. You may even see yourself in a photo in this or the next issue. My atrophied brain cells sometime shoot blanks when I try to remember things that are more than a week in the past.

Thanks to the Dead Bothans for the great "Scum and Villainy" doll display. Wish I could show you the photos of Darth in bed with two (!) blondes but the photos came out too dark to print!

The Star Awards were exciting and congratulations to all the winners. A special congrats to Judy on her Special Achievement Award. And my deepest thanks to you all for bestowing the Lifetime Achievement Award on me! I was totally surprised and grateful!

We are all settled into our new home now, although we are still looking for some things and there are still boxes in the garage that haven't been unpacked. We have no curtains up yet (there are miniblinds) but I'm getting an idea of what I want and will buy them when I have the money. We love our new place. It's located in a small town and we are way out just barely in the city limits so we're pretty much in the country. It's peaceful and quiet, we have great neighbors, and the whole pace of life is a lot slower there. Still, it's only 20 miles from Dallas so the commute to work isn't bad.

I'm running a few photos of the new house on the next few pages, as requested. These were taken about two weeks after we moved in, so there's no grass in the yard and boxes everywhere inside. It looks a lot better now.

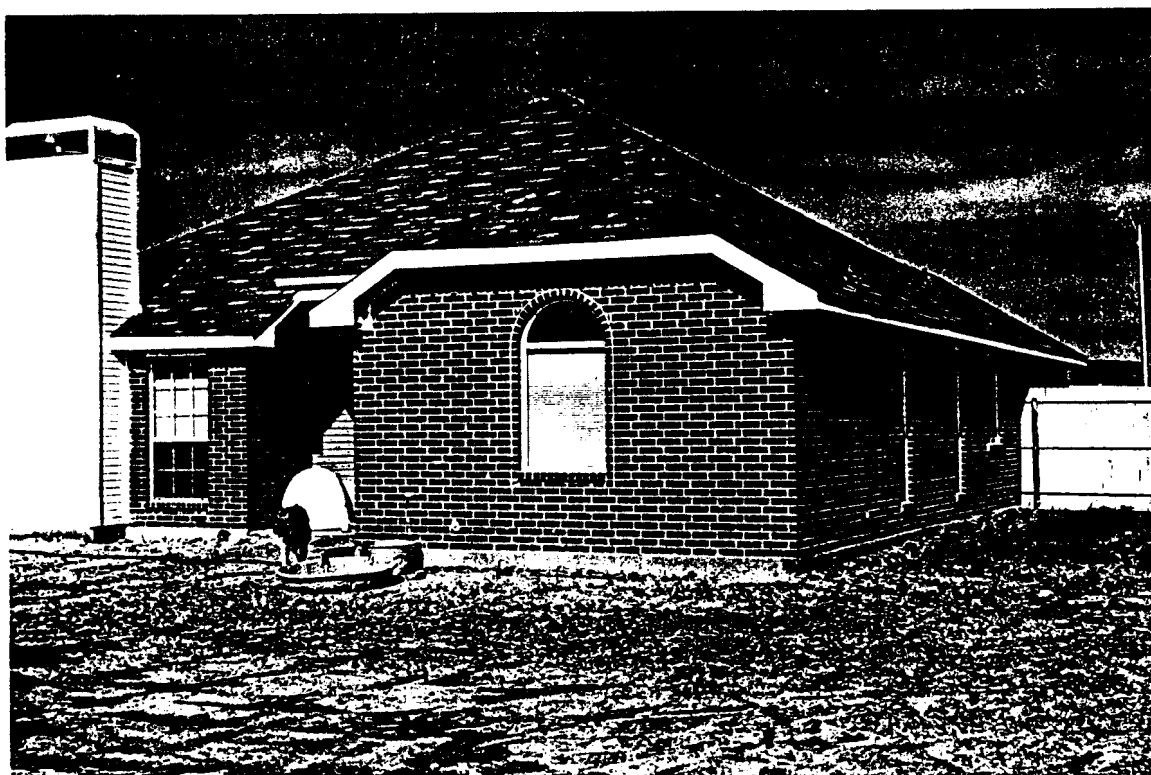
If you're ever in the area, give me a call!

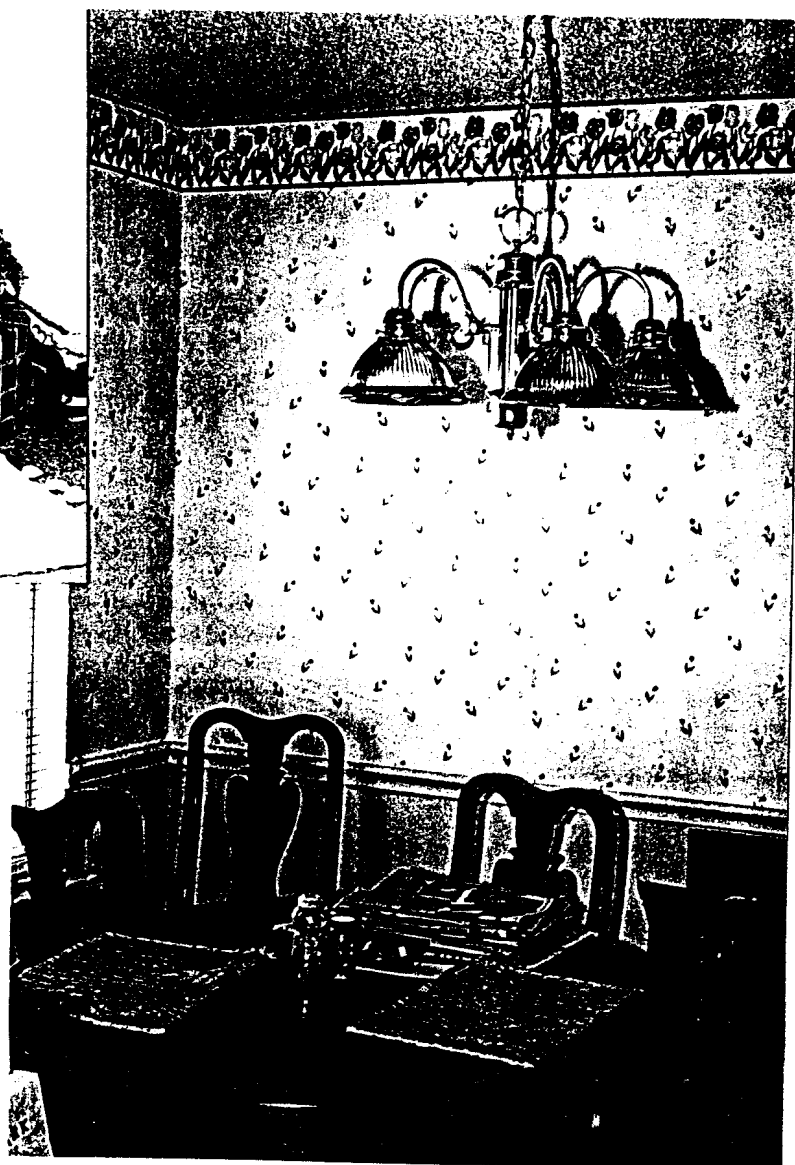
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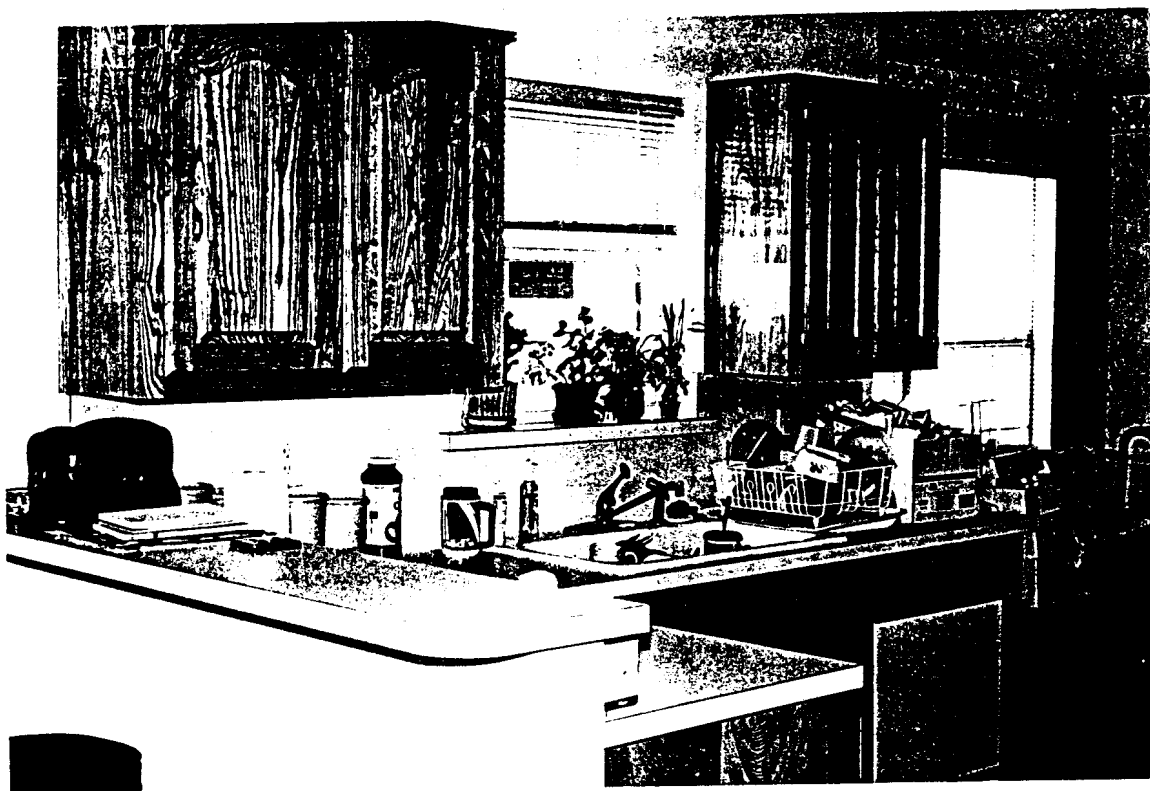
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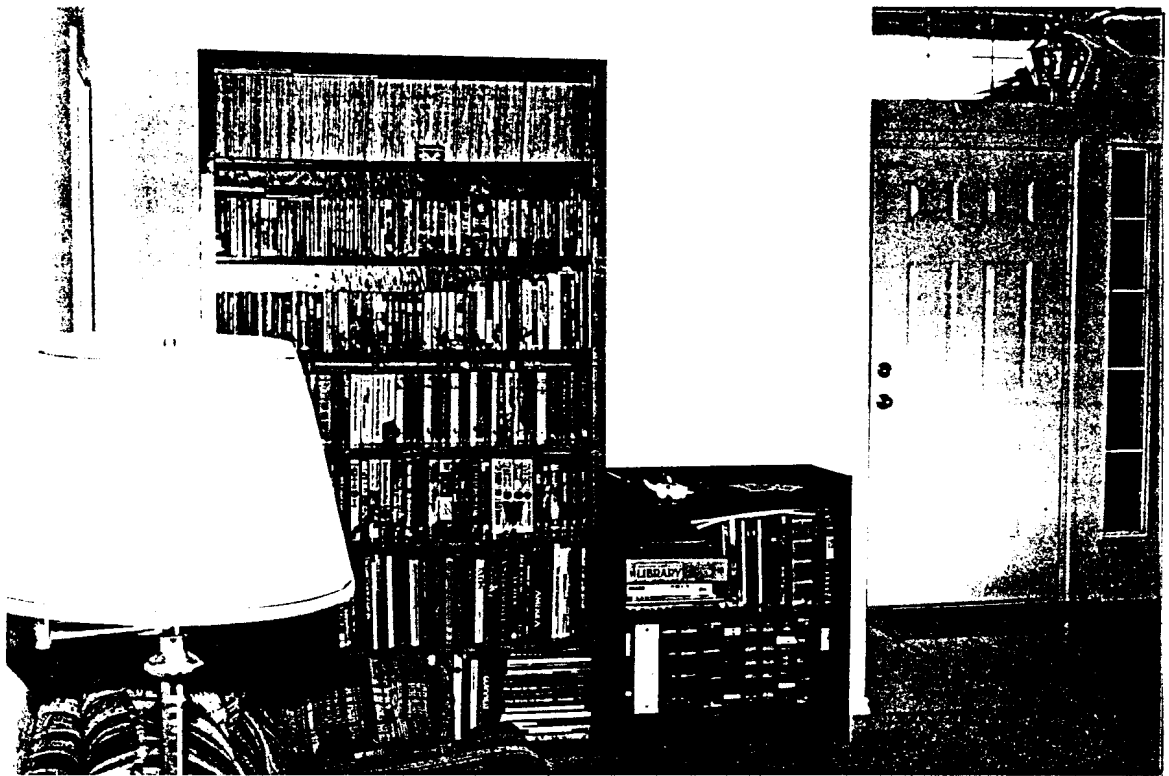
Subscription Price: \$8.00 single issue, \$24.00 for 3 issues or \$32.00 for a year. Please specify issue starting number. Back issues available for \$2.00 each. Please SASE for available issues. Ad Rates: Classified ads -- free. Half page ads: \$5.00 each. Full page ads: \$7.50 each or supply 75-100 flyers for insertion in issue.

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Some Scenes and Faces from MediaWest*Con XVI

May 24-27, 1996
Lansing, Michigan



Debbie Kittle, Marti Schuller,
Sheryl Haven, Louise Turner and ?

Photo from Debbie Kittle



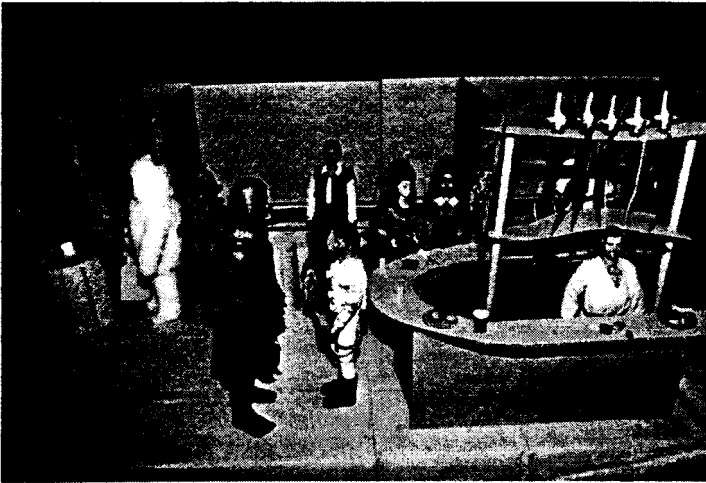
Carolyn Golledge
admires Captain Solo

Photo by Debbie Kittle



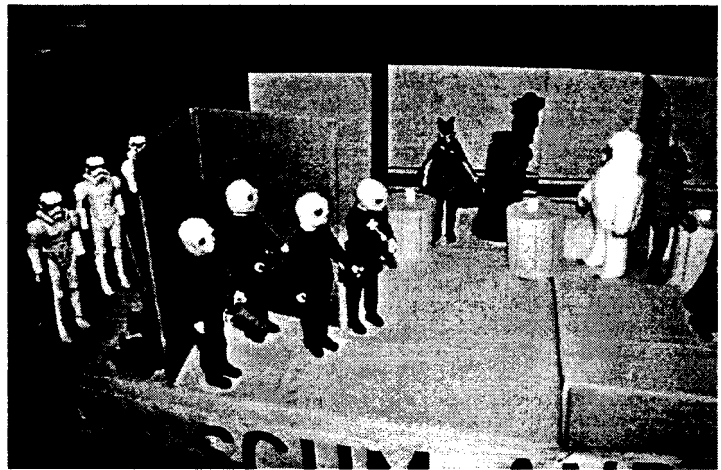
Judy Yuenger, Cheryl Pryor,
Carolyn Golledge, and Jennifer Moore

Photo by Debbie Kittle



SW Doll Exhibit — the Cantina

Photo by Debbie Kittle



SW Doll Exhibit — the Cantina

Photo by Debbie Kittle



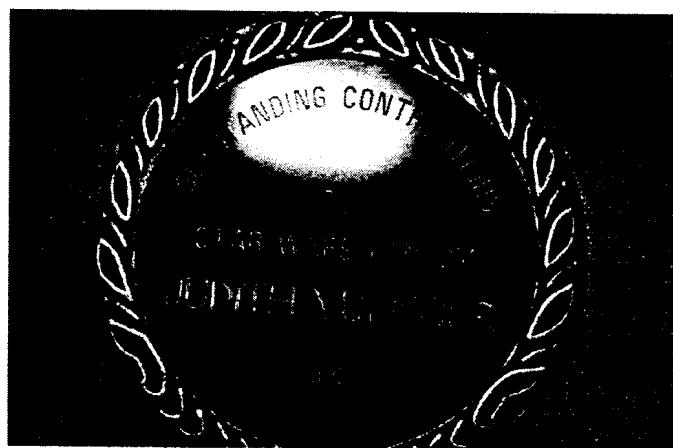
SW Doll Exhibit —
Jabba's Lair

Photo by Debbie Kittle



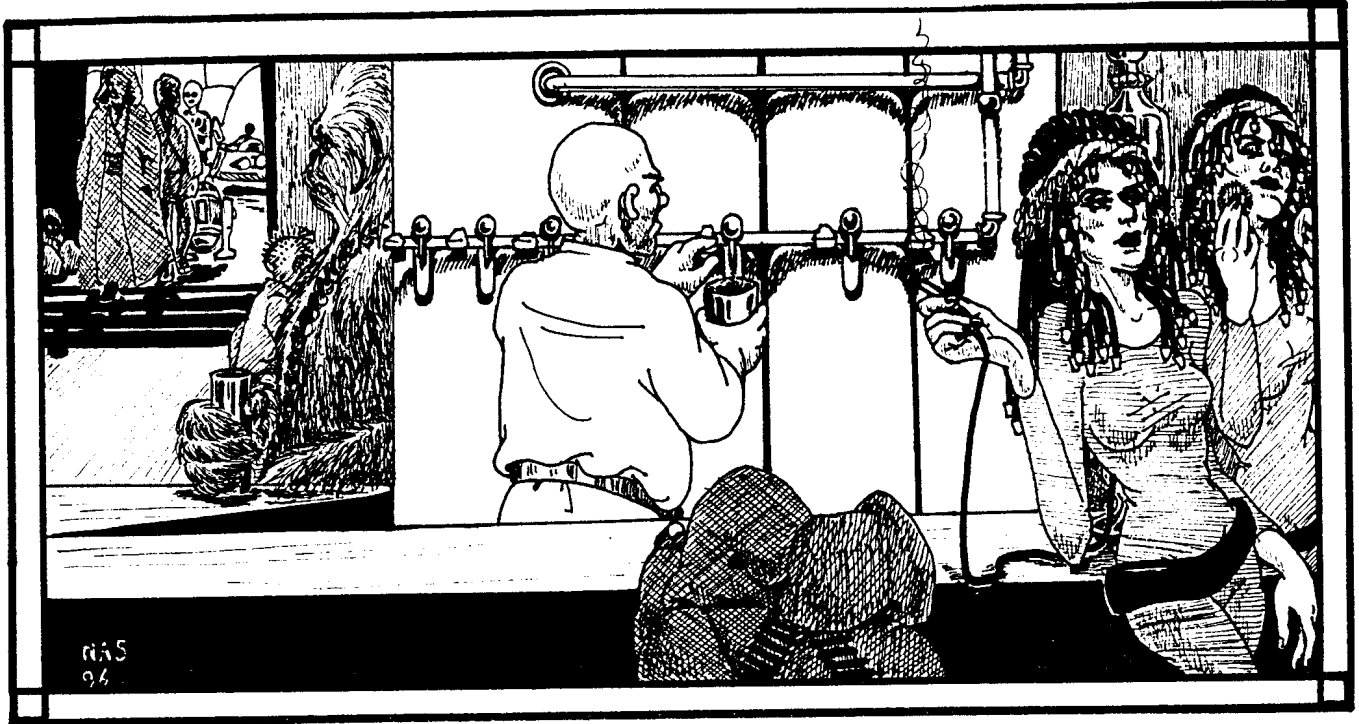
M. J. Mink

Photo by Debbie Kittle



Judy Yuenger's Medal

Photo by Debbie Kittle



FROM A CERTAIN POINT OF VIEW

ONLY FIFTEEN HANDS HIGH

Nora Mayers
212 Malcolm Drive
Centreville, MD 21617

February 2, 1996

Now that the snow has finally melted (though the trauma lingers on — Liz is still chortling that I took two hours to clear my car from the snowbank that had covered it ... only to have the snowplow come by five minutes later to dig everyone else out within seconds!), I think it plausible to blame Debbie Kittle for turning Washington, D.C. into Hoth. And I know she's responsible because she's the only Bothan I know who prays for snow!

Cheree: Congratulations on the new house, and may the You Know What be with you! Glad, too, that you recovered so well and so quickly! I love your idea about the readers' bios for issue 50, btw!

Louise Turner: Nawwww, Liz's horse tops out at only fifteen hands ... not high at all! I personally didn't pick up from the letter in question that denigrating fanfic was the theme. My impression of the letter was that 'zines are a great place for beginning writers, and *also* a great place for established authors. A place for "promising young journeymen", is how I remember the wording, which doesn't strike me as a slam at fans or fanfic — quite the contrary. However, I agree that a lot of what appears in fan fiction would never be accepted by pro publishing

houses. Sometimes, sadly, that is because the writer's skills still need work. And how lovely that fandom is there to help these "*promising young journeymen*" polish their craft. No one ever stops learning to write — neither the fan writer nor the established pro. It's great that we fanfic writers have a place to practice, have our work appreciated and critiqued. Consequently, a whole lot of fan writing is really superb. Fandom *is* a place for promising young journeymen, and hallelujah for it! Re: *The Adventure Journal*: WEG doesn't want fans using the original characters because they are trying to populate the SW universe with new and different characters that will appeal to their roleplayers. Gotta look at the reason they're in print. I didn't know two people played Wedge! Wow! Shows you how observant I am!!!

Laura Virgil: GOTTA DANCE! (The sound of happy tapping feet) [And thank you, Cheree, for getting us together via modem where, incidentally, we have been happily and deliriously Kelly obsessing. Look for a Gene door at Media West in '97]. Where was I when SW debuted? Standing in a very long movie line, complaining that I'd never stood in *any* movie line for *any* reason, and I didn't understand why my sister *insisted* we stand in line for this one!

Z.P.: I'm afraid that Lucas is going to concentrate on the FX too, rather than the story line. Hmm ... maybe he should go back and see *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, just to remind himself what happens when you choose that route. But we'll see ... hopefully we'll all be happily surprised and very happy with the results. Palpatine as

Luke's mom, huh? Well, as long as she doesn't turn out to be an Ewok ... but then, Luke *is* kinda short, isn't he? Hmmmm...

Maggie: HOORAAAAYY For Susan!!!!!! Yowza!!!

John Fredericks: Blush. Actually I did make up the scourge names, but it was all in jest! Re: sad but beautiful linking up with dark and nasty: Opposites attract!

Later!

STICK TO EMBROIDERY?

Z. P. Florian
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Falls Church, VA 22044

January 29, 1996

Taero: Now that would be an interesting idea, assuming that Vader knew all along that Luke lived on Tatooine, and he lost him only when Luke joined the Alliance and started to fly all over the Galaxy. This would fit with your theory of a misunderstood Anakin, accused of every conceivable sin and finally deciding that since they hate him anyways, he might as well give them reasons for it. And yes, I agree, calling Leia's child Anakin is something only a pro novel can do...

Mink: Humbly letting you know that the story about little Luke shopping with Beru is mine... The title is "Like Any Other Boy" and it was published in *Hibernation Sickness* 16. Re: if I ever sleep? I average about six hours daily, but why don't you ask if I ever vacuum the carpets, sweep the floor, wash windows, shine doorknobs, iron blouses or wash the car? Those are the things I gave up for SW... (Big fat sacrifice!)

Virgil: Welcome back, and go read the Hambly book. If I say it's all right, you can believe it, because I really, really don't like the pro novels. Harrison Ford is innocent. He did not invent anything in ROTJ, he did not make the silly Han. Actually he was begging Lucas to kill Han in the last movie. He said: Han has no mommy, no daddy, no place to go, let him die. I don't remember where I have seen this, but I will never forget the words. About Luke living alone — all I can say is that when I write Luke chaste and unmarried, I feel an immense sadness, and when I write him having children, I am happy. Naturally, that only means that I am not made to live alone. I think if I didn't have the love of my life, two children, two cats, a dog and a goldfish, I'd go out into the world to look for someone who needs me, roll up my sleeves and work on building a relationship. I don't understand women so desperately lonely that they would hook up with a man who kills their cats. That's not a need for love, that's a

need for someone who dominates them. There must be enough decent beings around, perhaps not all of them attractive or rich, but good-natured and in need of a caring partner.

Mayers and all who asked: I did send a story to West End. Actually, two stories, one was a straightforward, rather simple adventure, the other, using the same characters, was a proposal for a long and elaborate game version, complete with character stats and other stuff suitable for gaming. For some six months, I got not a word. Then I got really tired of waiting and sent them a multiple-choice questionnaire, something like: we hated it, we loved it, try again, stick to embroidery. The questionnaire came back with a handwritten answer on it, saying that they couldn't decide whether the material was more suited to a story or a game, and I should try again. At this point, I can't decide whether I am more suited to try again or just sit back and enjoy the fandom.

Karkoska: Banthas. A layer of thick fur helps preserve moisture on the skin, prevents sunburn... As to why they are so big, of course they have a so-called water-stomach, a large bladder-like inner organ, that can store enough water to keep a Bantha going for weeks. What do they eat? Why, it's obvious! Failed smugglers — Jabba said so! Thanks for liking "Windchimes" — and Luke's two dozen boys. I love them as my own kids and I love the way Luke loves them. I am not working on another sequel, but perhaps I will, because there is still a lot of potential there.

Nowakowska: Although I had already let you know, I want to do it again in a LoC: I am deliriously happy to hear that Susan Matthews' Andrej books will be in the stores. For SW fans who don't know, they are painfully beautiful, involving, disturbing books, that can become addictive in seconds.

Pryor: Hey, I knew that Han in the honeymoon hut was a takeoff on the Lybarger cartoon, which was a takeoff on *Frantic*. And I am positively whimpering with anticipation, knowing that in the doll show I will see Vader's boudoir. You dare to show polkadot underwear lying around, you're Sarlacc food!

Fredericks: A Lobot story? Hmm, that guy was totally ignored so far, I think. Go ahead and write it! Talk is cheap! Work! Tell us, what happened on Bespin after Lando left them knee-deep in Imperials!

Frayser: No one can misspend years as a journalist. Journalists are the people who know nothing about everything, and that qualifies them to write about alien planets and nonexistent cultures. As for fandom being a breeding ground for hatred — perhaps, but it is also a breeding ground for friendship, love and mutual admiration. At MWC, every year, we meet as if we had never parted. As if Lansing were suspended in time, we meet and hug and continue the conversations left off a year

earlier. I don't want to say that there are no arguments and that everybody likes everybody equally, but I think we have arrived to a level of maturity, where we don't feel that anyone who thinks Vader was not a functional male should be burned at stake, or anyone who questions Leia's virginity should be shot, or the sky will fall down if someone says Kenobi was a liar. I think we all learned to enjoy the different interpretations, and if we really, really feel that someone wrote something truly intolerable, we just up and write a counter-story to balance the Universe.

YE OLDE SOAPBOX

Veronica Wilson
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New Brunswick, NJ 09801

I bet you thought I'd died or gafiated or something, but the truth's a lot more pedestrian: I got really busy and simply didn't have the time to read SE thoroughly or respond. But issue #43 made me feel compelled to dust off Ye Olde Soapbox and rejoin the fray. (Now don't you feel excited? :)) Since I'm still pressed for time (you were right, Louise, the dissertation looms!), I am going to give my general thoughts on topics most of you were discussing last issue instead of addressing comments individually. We'll see if this works...

The whole Kenobi issue is very loaded, and our reactions to him can hinge upon whether we believe that in times of intense pressure and danger, sometimes the ends justify the means. But I think it is a mistake to judge the Knighthood as a whole by what we know of Kenobi and Yoda. Having said that, I will come to the issue of the Jedi Order a bit later. As for Kenobi, when he said, "I thought I could train Anakin just as well as Yoda taught me," he may *not* have meant that he wanted to train Anakin "just like" Yoda would have done, but "as well as", which does not literally mean the same thing. Kenobi might have thought that he understood Anakin better than Yoda would have, and that Anakin should not be trained in the same way Yoda did Kenobi. Perhaps Ben is so contrite about the whole issue not only because he failed and Anakin fell, but also because he directly defied what he knew Yoda's opinions on the matter would be. Remember, Kenobi says harsher things about Vader than Yoda does. Yes, this is from guilty conscience, but it could also be that Kenobi was deliberately harsher (or easier) on Anakin (sensing his propensity for Darkness) than Yoda would have been, and that this backfired, creating self-fulfilling prophecy. Please realize, folks, I am only speculating and don't know what I believe about the whole issue. My opinions change

depending on the day and my mood. :)

As for why Ben waits 3 years before telling Luke to go to Dagobah, there could be several reasons for this. (1) Perhaps it suddenly seems more imperative that Luke have full training right away once Kenobi realizes Vader is obsessed with finding him, and Luke may be in more danger now than previously. (2) Maybe Kenobi only recently came to terms with his responsibility for Anakin's fall, and only recently reconciled himself to having Yoda train Luke. Might not Kenobi have hoped Luke would find another surviving Jedi to train beneath? As both a student and a teacher in my own right, I have learned (sometimes painfully) that one meets and learns from instructors one respects and owes a great deal to, yet would choose an alternate means of teaching the same material. If there are dozens of ways to present the events of the Civil War and to give them different interpretations, just think of the myriad ways there are to teach and explain the Force! My point is that Obi-Wan could have respected and revered Yoda and still wished Yoda would see some things differently.

This is not to say that, if this is true, Ben is right and Yoda wrong, just merely that mentor and student are seldom carbon copies of one another. But Ben does not now have the luxury of having an array of Jedi instructors from which he can choose to train Luke. Yoda, to his knowledge, is the only (or perhaps the only qualified) Force-user living.

(3) We keep talking about how secluded or secret Dagobah was. Might sending Luke to Yoda also have been a way of keeping him safe from Vader now that the Dark Lord was combing the galaxy for him? Yoda's skills may have been only part of the reason Ben told Luke to go to Dagobah. It seems unlikely that Luke would have gone had Ben said, "Luke, you must go to Dagobah so that you'll stay out of harm's way. You can't face Vader and complicate things worse than they already are, for reasons I can't explain to you now. Oh, and by the way, take everything Yoda says with a major grain of salt. He trained me, but we don't always see eye-to-eye. Nevertheless, you must part ways with all your friends now."

I think it highly problematic to take the prologue of the ANH novelization at face value. After all, it is from the Journal of the Whills, which in the SW galaxy is written many years after the events of the film. The SW galaxy has turned our heroes into history and myth at that point, so the galaxy's peoples have a romantic slant in regard to the tales of Leia, Han, Luke, the end of the Empire, etc. This is under the New Republic, one presumes, and thus is akin to American myths of the Founding Fathers, myths which rarely discuss the shortcomings of our own republic's founders. Even many scholarly histories of the American

colonial/revolutionary period are overly kind to Washington, Jefferson, etc., choosing to mention their faults to make them seem more human, but at the same time mentioning these flaws only briefly in order to emphasize the founders' heroism. The presumption behind this is that cultures need myths to live by, stories to give as moral examples to children, ways to instill patriotism and a sense of one's own society's basic goodness. This is probably the case with the Journal of the Whills. These sorts of writings would be vitally important to the New Republic, which would have to invent a rich mythology that would appeal to many diverse peoples.

This leads us to the topic of Kenobi/the Jedi Order/the Old Republic. When the Journal of the Whills mentions that the Jedi were the heroic guardians of peace and justice, and when Kenobi echoes this, that doesn't mean that the Journal's words are wholly true or false. The truth usually lies somewhere in between. Jedi could have been very noble and heroic, peace-loving and selfless for generations and then have declined. If that were the case, they would have mythologized history as a shining example to justify upholding tradition and turning a blind eye to current folly or the present need for change. No institution can survive unchanged for centuries and hope to remain relevant or escape becoming the Establishment, with all the corruption that entails. Just one example (and no, I am not picking on anyone here) is the way many early, small, often beleaguered Christian denominations started out heroically brave and self-sacrificing, only to become moribund and fabulously wealthy and powerful centuries later, often agents of oppression rather than of spiritual liberation. Does that mean that the message of Christianity is all wrong or oppressive? Not by any means. Messages are not institutions. Similarly, the United States is genuinely based on the ideas of freedom and equality for all. It is in the Declaration of Independence and Constitution; we fought a civil war over what these words mean; we still base political campaigns and overseas ventures on these supposedly democratic premises. When looking at it this way, no one can deny what we strive (or at least pretend) to be. However, these words ring hollow and hypocritical to Americans who suffer poverty and injustice the government cannot or does not alleviate, as well as to people in other countries who are harmed by our military/economic power over their decisions. To them, we are not democratic, but imperialistic at worst and contradictory at best.

Perhaps this was the case with the Knighthood. They did not have to be consciously hypocritical or ill-intentioned to make some citizens feel betrayed or to make some Force-users feel oppressed, or to prevent the populace from fearing potential abuses of their powers. From this it is an easy step to call for reforms and

restrictions. If the Jedi Order chose not to heed such warning signs, then Palpatine and others could certainly have taken advantage of the growing alienation and fear, perhaps even genuinely sharing those concerns. We have no idea how the Jedi, when in power, treated Dark Siders, as we have discussed. There may have been some injustices there as well. Dark Siders prevented from practicing their beliefs freely could have cried that freedom of religion and association and speech, etc., was hardly honored in the Republic. Yet to the Jedi, just as to anti-Communists here in the States during the Cold War, it seemed necessary to limit the influence of "dangerous" individuals for the greater good of the galaxy as a whole. The same tensions would rend the Empire, in reverse order, and then appear again under the New Republic.

This is not Jedi-bashing. It is instead an attempt to reconcile how the Fall of the Republic might have occurred and how the Purge of the Jedi might have been explained and tolerated. This does not mean Kenobi lied about these events and the Jedi's possible roles in them, merely that he told Luke the truth as he knew it, unable to comprehend how the well-intentioned Jedi he knew could have caused their own doom or at least seriously frightened other beings in the galaxy. The same goes for the political structure of the Old Republic. Just because it survived for so long does not mean it was sound at the core towards the end. Inner decay could have set in after thousands of years. After all, our government has survived along constitutional lines for two centuries, and yet changed enormously in size and function since that time. (We have the same Constitution, yet far more enfranchised populations and a far vaster bureaucracy than the founders ever anticipated or advocated.) Whether this is for the better or worse is the subject of intense argument even now. But when dialogue breaks down and the use of coercive force breaks out between groups and government or between various groups, we are all in trouble, no matter the source of or reason for the conflict. Republics are founded on the premise of individuals' consent to be governed, and when individuals' perceived needs change, republics must adapt to those desires or die.

This is why the Jedi may or may not be necessary for the successful functioning of the New Republic, which cannot be exactly like the Old, no matter how much the new founders might wish otherwise. Too much happened in the interim, particularly since generations under the Empire were raised in fear and ignorance of the Jedi. The new Jedi, to be successful, also could not be the same as before. At the very least, they would not see the universe in the same ways as their predecessors. Hence, their necessity and proper roles would logically be a great matter of debate for the New Republic.

So, I'll finally put the soapbox away now. This is

clearly a result of having thought too much about history of late, and having stayed away from SE for too long! :) Take care, everyone.

PLOT AND CHARACTER

John Fredericks
5 Bayard Road, Apt. 101
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Good luck on the new house, Cheree. The floor plans were a neat idea. Loved the Kathy Tyers interview. From where did it come? Liked the Lucas interview, though what he says disturbs me. He seems very concerned with the film technology and less with the story. Sure Yoda couldn't walk and we all know he was a puppet. That's not what made the character interesting. Plot and character, George, please. Loved the Dead Bothan picture, but don't Dead Bothans ever smile?

Jacqueline Taero: Liked the idea that Vader may have known about Luke all along, that some part of Anakin (which he kept deeply hidden from Palpie) wanted Luke to grow up and come save him. Though that doesn't explain why the stormtroopers killed Owen and Beru instead of waiting there to ambush Luke, unless Vader gave them instructions to do so hoping to scare Luke off-planet. Maybe my explanation is getting too complicated here. Better move on.

I also agree that Bail is a better name for a kid than Anakin, though perhaps Lucas told them hands-off with Bail because he's not sure what he'll do with the prequels. If I'm remembering correctly, Bail's name isn't in any of the movies so George may decide not to use him.

Laura Virgil: Thanks for your first SW viewing tale. Here's mine: I first saw SW when I was seven or eight. Mom picked me up at my grandmother's and the two of us went to see it at a theater that has now closed. I had to go to the bathroom right before Luke meets Ben and I remember running so I would not miss anything. Here it is almost twenty years later, still afraid I'll miss something. Who woulda thunk it.

Z. P. Florian: Lucas won't really make the prequels. Everything that has to happen seems terribly depressing. Let's be real, he could have had those things out years ago if he was really interested in doing it. We're just getting strung along so LFL can make more bucks. I also ask everyone reading this to pray that I'm wrong. I want to see those new films, no matter how depressing, and I don't care about waiting for special effects. String up a few spaceships with fishing line, but tell me a good story about characters I want to believe in. Thanks for the doll tips,

too.

A. G. Steyn: Thanks for the insight into teachers falsifying history. We get complacent here in the U.S., not believing that stuff can really happen and we need to always be wary of it.

Marlene Karkoska: Sure there were Jedi doctors, politicians, scientists and warriors. I liken it to Catholic brothers and sisters (nuns): they live within a certain set of spiritual rules, but many of them work in the community using their particular talents. Except I like to think the Jedi had the option to marry. Thanks also for your comments about *The Crystal Star*. You were direct but polite, something all too rare these days.

Mary Jo Fox: You're leaving? Sorry to hear that, though I hope to keep in touch outside the pages of SE. You were the first other fan I ever wrote to, and *Blue Harvest* led me to the world of fan fiction and fan writing (for which I am grateful). Good luck with all your endeavors and with pro writing. Talk to you soon.

Matt Whitney: Glad to hear from another bookaholic. I keep my copy of *Fahrenheit 451* within easy reach. Bradbury makes the deft observation that books give you time to reflect on ideas. You can re-read them, ponder them, go back to the text again and again. Media doesn't allow for that sort of patient reflection, and that is to our society's detriment. Some of the kids I teach couldn't think their way out of a paper bag.

Debbie Kittle: Thanks for the doll news.

Louise Turner: I appreciate the fact that you didn't mention which pro author is a real jerk, though a part of me wishes you had, just to be sure I never buy a book of his again (not that most of them make me want to anyway. Accckkk!!)

Good luck with the Wedge zine. I have already begun the outline for the Wedge story I'm going to send you. The time for greater diversity in fanfic has arrived. I'll lay down the gauntlet and say that I would love to read more stories about Chewie, Lando, Ackbar, Kenobi, and Wedge.

I'd love to see the authors who do such a great job of portraying Luke or Han give another character a shot. ((Ed: Oh, John, have I got a zine for you! *A Tremor in the Force* #9 features nearly all of the above!)) I know most do fan writing for fun and personal fulfillment, but I suspect a lot of writers could really grow in their writing by experimenting with characters they have not written before, maybe even characters they don't even like.

Maggie Nowakowska: Agreed, where is the Lando merchandise? Why is he totally neglected in pro-dom and fan fic? He may be flashy and a sweet talker, but you don't engage Star Destroyers at point blank range if you're not strong inside. The pro writers treat him as a fop and, in one story I wrote, I used him as comic relief. Your stories and comments have made me look deeper inside the

character and I appreciate the insight. ((Ed: On a purely mercenary, commercial aspect, aren't merchandisers overlooking a character that African-American children could relate to? Not only a black man, but a black man portrayed as a hero? You'd think they'd really be going after that market.))

Cheryl Pryor: Liked your comparison of the Force to Zen. Didn't Lucas use Akido as background research for the Jedi? By the way, is your Luke zine still afloat?

John Fredericks: Wait a minute, that's me...

Tim Blaes: Chia Bantha? It could become a subculture like the Cult of the Deck Officer. Oz? Did you say Oz? Next to SW, it was one of my biggest passions of my childhood. Did you read any of the Ruth Thomson Oz stuff? I only own one of her books and have never found any of the others in libraries or stores, though I certainly would like to. I always felt Baum gave the Cowardly Lion too little attention in the books, treating him more as an animal than a viable character. Kinda like Chewie.

Anyone and Everyone: What would Luke and Leia have told the Rebel leaders when they brought Lando back to the Rebel fleet at the end of TESB? Would they have divulged everything about Lando at once, to avoid any skeletons popping up later? Would the Rebel leadership agree that Lando had no choice, or would they be suspicious of his actions? If so, how did he work himself into their good graces ("The Battle of Tanaab", anyone?) Or maybe Luke, Leia and Chewie just kept their mouths shut, figured it was better not to have anyone ask too many questions. After all, most of the Rebels probably came in under strange circumstances. How about it, folks?

Chewie's family should be canon. They are mentioned in *The Essential Guide to Characters* and they give the potential for some nice fanfic about Chewie and the tensions between home and Han. Besides, little Lumpy was just too cute to dismiss. Someone once wrote that he looked like a furrier version of Adam Rich from *Eight is Enough*.

As for comparing SW to Arthur, we can only hope ("only hope", get it?) it lasts as long. Maybe someday some historian will dig up a box of old zines and set off on a quest for Luke's grave, or the Holy Lightsaber.

Anyway, peace to all, even the Deck Officers.

WORTH THE PRICE

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I am going to try to word part of this LoC in more appropriate tense since it will not be published until after

MWC. We'll see how it works.

First of all, belated congratulations to Randy on his employment with Texas Instruments. I hope it's a long, mutually profitable experience. Secondly, congrats to the Cargill household on your new home. The floor plan looked spacious and comfortable and I hope you're all very happy in your new abode. Hopefully, construction began on schedule and you are now — or soon will be — settled in your new environ. I'm certain Katy will adjust quickly, if she hasn't already.

As for raising the price of SE by one dollar, I'm surprised it's taken this long for the matter to be approached. I, for one, am not averse to an increased price and consider SE well worth the understandably higher rate. I'm sure others will agree.

Now to the letters.

Jacqueline Taero: Re Vader knowing whether he has a son as pertains to Kenobi's passing on of the lightsaber — I will partially agree that by mentioning his father to Luke, Obi-Wan assuaged the boy's interest, but that's as far as I can follow your position. Admittedly, I am one of the few who seems willing to view Obi-Wan with a forgiving eye, but that is neither here nor there. It's my opinion that Obi-Wan sincerely believed that *Anakin* would want his son to have a lightsaber. Perhaps during his earliest training with Kenobi, he even voiced such a wish for a future son, maybe going so far as to fashion a second lightsaber for that distant day. When Anakin turned to the Dark Side and Obi-Wan discovered Anakin's wife's pregnancy, he may have set the forgotten weapon aside to bestow later, in memory of the man he'd known and lost. Come on, people, give the old guy a break. Haven't we all made mistakes and compounded them later with "good" intentions?

I did find your comparison between SW and *Lord of the Rings* quite interesting. I, too, see Obi-Wan as Bilbo, but only because I can better accept Yoda as a kind of aloof and diminutive Gandalf.

As for why Leia has no offspring named for either of her foster parents in the so-called professional novels, I did find the omission disturbing. But then I absolutely loathe the novels anyway and the above is but one of many points that total a complete disgust for the books. I absolutely agree that Leia would never name a son Anakin, nor do I believe for a fraction of a second that Han would meekly or mutely entertain such an absurd notion.

Of course Luke should "get laid" now and then! My point exactly! I may have made him sterile in *my* galaxy, but not impotent!!

Laura Virgil: It was so good to see your name in the letter index. Though we've never met, I've long been in slack-jawed awe of your artistic talent. In fact, I still own a *Beauty and the Beast* t-shirt you designed that I bought

at my first MWC. It would be wonderful to see your skills turned to SW once more. Though my purse is all-too-shallow, I would most definitely rejoice at finding your art for sale or auction again. Any chance you'll be appearing in any SW zines in the near future? ((Ed: *Funny you should ask. Laura has allowed me to run three of her older but no less magnificent pieces in the new issue of A Tremor in the Force.*))

By now I'm sure most are familiar with my particular "...when SW opened" story, but to satisfy your curiosity I'll repeat it again. Unlike many, I did not know anything about SW prior to seeing it. Possibly this is explained by the fact that I was already married and the mother of two quite active preschool boys who drained what little energy reserves I had. Anyway, my husband had been hearing about this film from various sources and was curious to see it for himself. Being on vacation at his parents' lake cabin — thus available use of ready babysitters since said parents were also on vacation — and having noticed the film was playing in the nearby small town theater, he convinced me to accompany him. (Not that it took a lot of talking on his part for a housebound mother.) While I enjoyed the film, I cannot say I was instantly swallowed up by this marvelous galaxy. As I recall, my immediate comments afterward went something like "It's just a good western in space." Yet I could not get the film out of my mind and requested we see it again several weeks later on our anniversary outing. That time I was swept away and have been ever since. And, yes, I was drawn to Luke the most right from the start.

Your observations on being single in our society were eloquently expressed and, though I am married and a mother, I applaud your stand and congratulate you on your healthy independent happiness.

Okay, I do understand how Han fans may feel that he was mistreated in ROTJ, but may I offer the following as a *possible* explanation for his transformation? We had already begun to see subtle changes occurring in Han's character anyway and having just undergone what must have been a harrowing, near-death experience (carbon freeze), surely his altered mental state is understandable. They say many people who survive life-threatening ordeals temporarily undergo a kind of reverence for existence afterward. Also, Han seemed to be to be a rather cynical, distrusting man with but one being in his life that he held faith in prior to meeting Luke. Being rescued by Lando, Leia, Chewbacca and Luke — at no small risk to themselves, I might add — must have had a profound effect on the former loner. Yes, his character seemed to swing too far from the original, but I suspect that, like the heart attack victim who savors sunsets for months and then gradually reverts to old ways, Han too would eventually swing back to some new and comfortable middle ground

between the Solo of ANH and the man we see in ROTJ.

As for the less than ardent kiss concluding the near end of the film, a long and lusty kiss would have seemed out of place, given the setting, the crowd and the previous dialogue — at least for me. However, I am certain that passionate kiss and much, much more happened later. :)

Nora Mayers: Congrats on your sale to West End Games. And, the passing of Gene Kelly is a loss for us all. Thank the Force for films, where he will remain forever young.

Z. P. Florian: You and Minky simply must write your turnabout stories! The premise is just too delicious and you two could do it so perfectly. Speaking for Judy without permission, (but certain she'd agree), *Smelly* would love first chance at publishing!

Re your comments to Marlene Karkoska concerning Yoda's comments about Luke completing his training and then later saying he needed no further training. Had you considered that the "training" Yoda was referring to could have been of a more emotional and less physical or even Force-oriented nature? Perhaps Yoda hoped that during the remainder of Luke's education, the old master could prepare the youth for the revelation of his parentage prior to Yoda telling him outright himself. This would explain why, on Luke's return, the training would no longer be necessary. Luke had already learned the truth, resisted the initial shock and temptation and returned to his mentor.

I, too, am a fan of *Forever Knight*. Out of curiosity, have you read any of David Eddings' *Belgariad* series?

Marlene Karkoska: I hope you've fully recovered from your surgery by now and are feeling wonderful.

Let's agree to disagree over Luke's need for a family, okay? Obviously neither of us will change our minds, though I was relieved to see your softened approach to the subject. In *my* galaxy, Luke finds the companionship and comic relief you spoke of through his friends, his sister and Han. Especially Han. I do not read nor do I accept anything from any of the novels as part of my galaxy, but I have no problem with those that do. Personally, I can only write what I believe and feel.

Louise Turner: I hope you made it to MWC and that we met and had fun.

Maggie Nowakowska: Unfortunately, I have little cash to offer, but I *love* the idea for a special 50th issue of SE. Both yours and Cheree's ideas sound good to me. If there's any way I can help, let me know. It was most thoughtful of you to consider this special occasion, Maggie.

John Fredericks: Oh, whoa, please. Speaking from personal experience and as an avid listener, who says family relationships are *ever* "normal"? I think Luke will have his hands full enough as it is. :)

Tim Blaes: You are *not* the only one who rapidly scans