

Catchpenny Gazette



Number 9 • Mid-Summer 2005



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It's not rocket science ... it's not brain surgery ... it's ...

ROCKET SURGERY

David Burton

Believe it or not, there *are* stranger hobbies than being involved in fandom.

Over the past few years, I've noticed the odd dollar bill (or even rarer still, a higher denomination) make its way into my hands that was stamped in red ink "Track where I've been! See Where I'm Going at www.wheresgeorge.com!" or with some similar slogan. Some were stamped several times front and back, some had pretty fancy stamps circling the Treasury seal, some were different colors, and a few were even hand-written. I'd always intended to visit the site and see just what the heck was up, but as is usually the case, those bills got out of my wallet much quicker than I'd like, and without them I forgot all about the site.

One day, staring forlornly at my last remaining dollar until payday, I noticed that it was one of those stamped bills. So I decided to log on to the Web site and see what it was all about.

What I discovered was an entire little sub-culture.

Wheresgeorge.com works like this. You enter the denomination, serial number, and series number of your bills into their database. If

it's one that's already been entered, the person who entered it gets points and finds out how far the bill has traveled since they marked it and released it back into the "wild." If it's a new bill, you wait until someone else with way too much time on their hands notices it and visits the Web site – then *you* get the points and information.

Now, this would seem to be only a slightly more boring pastime than watching paint dry (see the National Association of Paint-watchers website at www.boredbeyondbelief.com for more information about *that* particular hobby), and I suppose to many people it would be. But there are a group of hard-core, dedicated enthusiasts who take the hobby *very* seriously. They concoct maps of the counties that their bills have been reported in; some get "straps" of new bills from the bank each week to stamp;

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Masthead is a detail from a daguerreotype by Lorenzo Chase (ca. 1850). Cover: Photo by David Burton Page 3: Brad Foster Page 4: Brad Foster. Page 6: William Rotsler. Page 8: William Rotsler. Page 10: William Rotsler. Uncredited art from various dingbat fonts.

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NOTES FROM BYZANTIUM

ERIC MAYER

Electric Attic

The Internet is supposed to be about the future. Pure sf. The Library of Alexandria for the 21st century. The whole planet linked in instantaneous communication. The greatest invention of all time.

Instead it's mostly the past. Tom Swift's Amazing Electric Attic.

Used to be the past went away and stayed away. Now you just have to rummage around the Internet. Ancient television shows and movies are all there. Trying to recall the name of an obscure sixties band that cut two singles and broke up? Once upon a time they were never to be heard of again. Today they've got a new CD available at their website. And look, between that bag full of beloved old advertising jingles and the box of radio dramas – there's one of my mini-comics! Who the heck saved that?

Why, with things like the Google cache and the Wayback Machine the Internet is busily preserving its own past.

In the long ago, when I sat reading *Detective Comics* with a cracked 45 of the "The Purple People Eater" for a soundtrack, a cool glass of root beer Fizzies in my hand, I sometimes felt a frisson, almost like I was being watched.

Now I know what it was. Me peering back at myself from the future through the Internet.

What I Heard at the Grocery

You know you're getting old when you actually like the music that's playing in the grocery. I used to hate muzak. Well, heck...muzak...it's a synonym for bad music. But Badfinger isn't bad music. Is it? To me it isn't. Maybe to someone from a different generation Badfinger sounds as

insipid as what they used to play in elevators in my youth.

I was even more startled, while examining overpriced tomatoes, by the sound of the Kinks. Not one of their old hits either but "Don't Forget to Dance," the obscure (I thought) eighties follow-up to "Come Dancing." Who would ever think to play that in a grocery store? It wasn't even played on the radio.

Last week, however, came the ultimate shocker, thus far. I was musing over whether I should buy the large eggs or jumbo when what starts playing but "Feel A Whole Lot Better" by the Flamin' Groovies. They're practically a cult band aren't they?

I'm supposing someone selecting these songs is amusing themselves by slipping in a few of their old favorites.

Anyway, as soon as I heard that great guitar, I forgot all about eggs. I was ready to party. I raced around to the next aisle and picked up a six pack of Ensure.



If This Is Tuesday I Must Be A Geezer

Recently I took my second step toward official geezerdom. I took my initial step (I am tempted to call it my "baby step" but how inappropriate that would be!) five years ago, after I turned fifty. That's when I participated in the traditional

American coming-of-advanced-age ritual, the first free coffee at Wal-Mart.

On Tuesday, when I trundled my groceries up to the checkout, the clerk (who was more ancient even than I) asked if I was 55? I had, in fact, “celebrated” that very birthday the previous month. On learning she’d guessed correctly that I had one foot in the grave, she gave me \$7 off my order. Some consolation.

After I got home it started to worry me. I’ve never looked my age. She hadn’t so much as asked to see an ID. Heck, I was carded, buying

beer, when I was forty. Well, that grocery store clerk was about eleven and probably thought anyone over the age of puberty was Methuselah, but still...

Then a happy thought occurred. “Wait

a minute,” I told Mary. “Tuesday is senior citizens discount day at the store! That’s why she asked.”

That and maybe all my the gray in my hair and the white in my beard.

There are six other days in the week to shop. I think I’ll start going on Thursdays instead.

When I am an old man I will not buy groceries on Tuesday.

Baseball and Immortality (Kind Of)

When I was a kid I thought it was strange and ghoulish how my grandmother would turn first to the newspaper’s obituary page. Now that I’m older it doesn’t seem so weird. Web news doesn’t come in pages, but the obituaries always catch my eye. Recently, for instance, I saw that Dick Radatz, who pitched for the Red Sox in the early sixties, had died. He was a towering relief pitcher who had more strikeouts on his Strat-O-

Matic card than anyone else. Woe to the poor hitter when the roll of the dice left him at the mercy of “The Monster’s” pitcher’s card. That whole set of Strat-O players is dying off. The last time I wrote about baseball it was Rod Kanehl who’d passed into the realm of pure statistics.

I was reminded of the fate of Ted Williams, who became the most famous cryogenically “preserved” person outside Walt Disney (if you believe the rumors...). I’m not sure how preserved one can be when the head is residing separately from the body. I know...I know...the brilliant folks in the future won’t have any problem dealing with a little thing like that. Then again, who’s to say they’ll see any use for one guy that made cartoons and theme parks and another who played baseball? Who’s to say there’ll be any baseball by the time thawing out corpses and reattaching the heads is a minor matter?

I understand that sf writer Charles Platt is a big proponent of cryogenics. I like his chances even less than Ted’s or Walt’s. Heck, those reanimaters of the far future won’t need our science fiction, they’ll *be* our science fiction.

It takes some hubris to figure someone is going to want to go to all the trouble and expense to bring you back to life centuries from now. I figure a lot of the cryogenically inclined might end up with their heads being used for doorstops and paperweights. If they have doors and paper by then.

Come to think of it, there’s your next bestselling mystery – Ted Williams and Walt Disney are thawed out two hundred years from now and...are you ready for this...they team up to solve a murder.

Unfortunately I won’t have time to write this masterpiece since baseball season is here and I am studying box scores. I suppose those numbers will be preserved long after all of us are gone and/or frozen. •

*Eric’s column is extracted from his blog, located at:
www.journalscape.com/ericmayer*

Story In Plastic

I want to talk seriously to you about plastic grocery bags. Do you believe these things? Consumer Reports magazine tells us not to believe the supermarkets when they tell us their new plastic bags are now biodegradable. I don't remember specifically what change had been made nor what difference had been made, but I remember coming away with the impression that comparing the old bag with the new was like comparing one kind of rock with another. Not a difference that would help a chemist's resume if submitted to a conservationist cause.

Regarding biodegradability, not too long ago I read a science item describing how researchers are digging through dumps to salvage plastic items which have been discarded over the decades. The purpose was to view their biodegradability under real-world conditions. They chose old dumps, and dug deep, taking plastic samples from a variety of strata. This sounds like a terribly dirty and inefficient method. They could, instead, have simply come over to our place. I live with a pack-rat. A lovable pack-rat, I hasten to add, but a pack-rat nonetheless. I believe that Jackie has the first piece of paper she ever owned, and certainly she has the first plastic food storage container. Although her container collection is scattered about the apartment, generally the age can be determined by the degree of yellowness, although I'll have to admit that the one with Garfield embossed into the cover appears more the worse for wear than the one with Betty Boop.

However, I digress. But, actually, I'm glad these plastic bags aren't biodegradable. Really. You see, if they really were biodegradable I'd likely have to use the @%&! things. Paper bags might be eliminated as a politically-correct option. The veneer would be stripped away to reveal my true reason for not using plastic bags.

I can't seem to get along with them.

I used them twice.

The first time, I lifted groceries out of the cart and into the trunk. Everything looked fine. Groceries in plastic bags, all lined up. I shut the trunk, not aware this was the last time I would see that view.

I had to reconstruct what must have happened. Each bag of groceries was like a fat man with baggy pants (or, if you prefer, a person of substance who was apparel challenged). There is always the danger that his pants could fall down. That must be what happened to the groceries. Their pants, the



Dave
Locke

Written in
1997

plastic bags, fell down. However, unlike the fat man, the groceries were now much freer to move, and had moved all over the trunk. When I opened it, the groceries were so evenly spread out that they concealed the bags. "Where the hell did the bags go?" was what I first wondered, and then I thought "Geez, they can't be *that* biodegradable."

The next time I tried plastic bags, which was quite a bit later because, to be honest, I hadn't found them too endearing, I tied the handles together on each of the four bags before lifting them into the trunk. Sort of like putting suspenders on the fat man.

There was a lot of noise on the trip home, after which I opened the trunk to find that it now contained four lumpy beach balls. As I reconstructed it at the time, plastic grocery bags are like plastic garbage bags, only smaller. With the garbage bags, you place them inside wastebaskets or garbage cans to give them support. Without that support the contents settle and the bags tend to become round in shape. I think there may even be a scientific principle involved. However, as only two eggs were broken and the bread eventually regained most of its original shape, I deemed the trial to be moderately successful when combined with specific inspirations on improvements that could be made the next time. The next time, I figured, I could run a bungee cord through the bags' handles to keep them tethered when they metamorphosed into beach balls. Also, I figured we could open each bag after placing it in a large dishpan, to prevent the groceries from settling all over the kitchen counter when the pants hit the ankles. With these modest adjustments, plastic bags might be no more than a bad idea and a huge pain.

That was about three years ago. I'll have the third trial any day now.

It is unbelievable that plastic bags are our Best Answer to the question of carrying home the groceries. It is conceivable that they could be

our only in-store option. If the paper bags disappear, we either accept the plastic, bring in our own carriers (I've one of those canvas grocery bags, which in the rigid-form department is just a step up from carrying groceries in a sack made from the shirt you were wearing when you entered the supermarket), or park very near the exit and make a lot of trips. Or we start now to stockpile our paper bags instead of throwing them back to nature or recycling them quite so soon.

I'm looking into an apartment with an extra bedroom. Preferably at ground level, and near a supermarket. A pantry near the back door would be ideal.

Unbelievable. •



Rocket Surgery *continued from page 2*

they discuss strategies for getting their bills noticed (spend them at convenience stores or gas stations with high cash turnovers, but never late at night when the money is liable to be deposited in the bank where they could sit for a while); and I suppose inevitably, human nature being what it is, there are those feel the need to cheat to get a higher "George score" by "dumping" bills – spending a lot of marked bills in one place.

It seems a harmless little hobby, and it might prove interesting to see if any of the bills I've marked turn up anywhere. Maybe they'll even land someplace exotic. In my younger, wilder days I certainly circulated plenty of dollar bills in some fairly "exotic" locales – mostly playing "tuck a buck" at area gentleman's clubs. And now that I recall *that*, maybe I don't really *want* to know where my bills have been or where they're going... •

FOUND IN COLLECTION

CHRIS GARCIA

Not too long ago I gave Gordon Van Gelder, the respected editor of *The Magazine of Science Fiction & Fantasy*, an early (or maybe it was late) birthday gift. The gift was he would no longer have to keep writing me rejection letters, as I gave up writing fiction. It was easy for me since I had little success with fiction and a constantly growing fanbase for my work in non-fiction. I managed to get articles in various places and started seriously writing more fannish material as well. In all, I think I made a wise choice, but somehow, the Ghods of Irony decided to play a rib on me and sent me a back through a dusty old box.

While going through a large stack of donations from a few former Apple employees, I found a number of fun things, like badges of all sorts (including a couple that will show up in a future *Found in Collection*) and a number of odd books. A small booklet caught my eye in the pile that our Head Curator had deemed trash. I picked it up and gave it a looking-over. I knew instantly from the front illustration, an astronaut playing chess against a dragon, that this was something that had to be added to my collection. The booklet was titled *Constructing Scientifiction & Fantasy*. Now, even I know that

anyone using the word *scientifiction* would be old school, most likely having some connections to the 1950s.

The authors turned out to be John Ashmead, Darrell Schweitzer and George Scithers. I'd never heard of Ashmead, had seen Schweitzer's name here and there, but I knew Scithers from *Amra*, a very good fanzine of the late 50s and 60s. Somehow, I had missed that he had edited *Amazing* and later *Weird Tales*. Then again, I often miss things like that. After a trip to the Wikipedia, and another to Google, I quickly discovered their past lives and went about reading the thing.

Scithers is an important part of the history of science fiction, though he pales in comparison to Gernsback and Campbell, but also an important memory chamber for SF fandom. He won a couple of Fan Hugos in the 1960s, and there are those who have said that *Amra* was one of the true classics. He also chaired the first DisCon in 1963. He also happened to be the Millennium Philcon's Guest of Honor, as well as the 1979 NASFiC's Fan GoH. I've since been told that if I am looking for an answer to the highest order of fannish questions (such as Why FANAC?), go to George.

As for the book, I was not impressed.

Now, I should say that I was a Creative Writing Major in college, even though at times I was accused of being a Creative Spelling Major. I was never a cream of the crop-type writer, and I doubt I ever will be, but I had a particularly good science fiction writing prof named Lynn Williams. She wasn't a science fiction writer herself, but she was a commentator and a literary historian. She died a couple of years back, but she taught me a lot about how the genre works and the ways to fix your problems and the problems that are inherent to the genre. She taught a simple rule that I stick to: never write anything you can't read, but at all costs, avoid writing like you speak.

My greatest writing problem is that I write exactly like I talk. I've actually done a comparison between my speaking on a subject and my writing on a subject and the two are so similar that it almost sickens me. Sadly, the booklet seems to say that revision should be to fine tune instead of overhauling. The modern writing theory seems to go the opposite way, with hyper-attentive revisions being required at all times. I tend to fall into that camp, at least when I was writing fiction, since I would labor over revisions and still not perfect it to a point where people would buy my stories. Then again, when I just sent a first draft, they also wouldn't sell.

The booklet was put out by Amazing Science Fiction Stories and TSR Hobbies Inc, who owned *Amazing*. Some of it is worth taking to heart; the mechanical stuff about how to set up a page and so on. This was from 1982, which meant that almost no one was working with computers yet. Even though that's the case, I can think of two or three similar books that would do a better job of explaining the pre-computer days of formatting. It almost read as a guide about how to get a story into *Amazing*, which would be a noble piece of work, for certain.

I gave a call to the woman who donated the boxes of Apple material and we chatted for a few minutes. She had been at Apple from 1978 through to 2001. She had seen Steve Jobs come and go and rise out of the ashes. She had also seen two of her groups killed off (the Apple][and the Newton) over the years. I asked her about the booklet and she laughed.

"I so wanted to be a writer. I even became a technical writer so that I could hone my skills for writing for *Analog*. I just happened to enjoy the things I was writing about more than writing about them so I got a degree in Electrical Engineering and started working with computers instead of writing manuals."

We talked some more about her donations, about conventions, about the stuff that she had written. Eventually, I asked her if she had ever managed to get a story published and she hemmed for a while, then said the most telling statement of all.

"Well, if I was willing to read that little book of instructions, I bet you can guess how far I got with my own work." •



Epistles

Letter column



Chris Garcia

I didn't know you were a part of Seti@home. The SETI folks donated a bunch of their early machines (1980s and earlier) to the collection and we've polished them up and are trying to think of an exhibit for the future. We were thinking of doing something with them this year, but we decided on our Chess Exhibit instead. On the Sexy Scale of Museum Artifacts, it's Deep Blue over various purpose-built machines. I've known a lot of folks involved with the various forms of SETI over the years, the most notable being Seth Shoshtek, and I'm always interested in hearing more.

I still have most of the computers that I've owned, including my first, a Timex-Sinclair 1000. 16K (yeah, Kilobytes) of RAM, no monitor (it plugs into your TV) and a cassette recorder for data storage. Every once in a while I get it out of storage just to remind myself what it used to be like...

The SETI@home concept is just another example of computing gone wild. The same concept is being used to find the next series of Marsenne Prime numbers. It's a crazy world and there are new concepts, like selling your cycles on the cell phone you carry with you to allow for greater computation by the aviation industry. Wow. I'm always amazed at the things we are trying.

There are also distributed computing projects at work in medicine and chemistry, and probably other fields as well. It sure seems to me to be a great way to use otherwise "non-productive" processing power.

I've often done a panel at cons titled 'How the Future has Failed us at Every Turn', talking about many of the same issues that Eric Mayer brings up in his first couple of paragraphs. There are a lot of advantages to manned space flight. The issues we've had with the various Mars Rovers show that.

Look at the speed at which the Rovers are moving and compare that to what a human could do with a fairly simple set of sensors at his disposal. There is room for manned space flight in certain situations, such as checking out locations where we'd like to eventually settle. Send the unmanned stuff to Saturn and beyond.

As a guy who hates eggs, I've discovered that meatloaf using a touch of slightly moistened Tapioca works very nicely, as does instant mash and beaten tofu.

Calendars are strange things. I've often been amused by the fact that so many different systems exist relatively in harmony. I mean, the numbers are different, but there's a lot of successful work done to get folks where they need to be. There's also the movement to have an Internet Standard time, which would sort of lie over your regular time and only be useful when you're planning an event for a world-wide audience or as a reporting tool when something or someone goes wrong.

I've found a little more about *Myrddin* from the first "Found in Collection." There were four issues published over the space of about 5 years. I even found a place where I could buy 1, 2 & 3, but not 4. It's not listed in Greg Pickersgill's Memory Hole, which made me question its importance, as Greg seems to have everything listed. I've actually started looking into getting the other issues, and I might even have a lead on Lawson Hill, the editor of the thing! •

Robert Lichtman

CPG No. 7 – Nice cover. Was interested to read in the lettercol in No. 8 that it and the cover on No. 8 were taken fifteen years ago when you were going through a Photography Phase. To me the one on

No. 7 is a more successful shot: better composition and framing and an intrinsically more interesting scene. Ducks at water's edge don't particularly grab me, perhaps because I see them in person so frequently.

I don't know how it is in the rest of the country, but here in central Indiana, geese are becoming a real problem. Building codes for the past 25 or so years have required retention ponds for new construction of any size, and apparently those ponds are the ideal habitat for Canadian geese. Other than being arrogant and belligerent and tending to hold up traffic, the geese themselves aren't much problem. It's the "stuff" they leave behind that's becoming a little much... And the ponds themselves are attractive not only to geese, but also young children; a handful drown in them here every year.

The best part of Dave's article on squirrels was the illustration on its second page. Don't get me wrong, though; I enjoyed reading what he wrote about them but simply didn't have any other response.

Chris Garcia's running across a fanzine in the kipple of Jim Warren reminded me, for no good reason, of when I found three or four issues of *Slant* in a used bookstore near downtown Los Angeles back in my neofan days. For 35 cents each! Naturally I bought them all. As for floppy records, I have no recent experience of them, but back even before fandom when I was in my early teen years I used to buy a "magazine for teenagers" called *Dig* and in at least one issue was one of them. I don't remember what was on it, but I **was** able to play it on my low-tech phonograph of the time. As I recall it wasn't an altogether satisfactory experience. Being flimsy, it didn't want to lay down flat on the turn table. And being light, it didn't even like the relatively soft touch of the stylus on the tone arm and would occasionally skid. I'm not surprised they went away.

Men's pants – most of mine are jeans of various colors and degrees of brightness or fadedness. But I also own a few cords, some slacks, and even one suit (worn once, for my youngest son's wedding).



Fortunately my job allows me to wear jeans and so do most occasions outside work. I really don't feel "myself" in other types of pants.

Good to see Eric Mayer back in fanzines.

In his LoC Chris Garcia makes reference to his father, "a con-going fan dating to the late 1960s," acquiring copies of various fanzines, one of which he calls *Off-World* ("the original from the 1950s, not the later one"). This gave me pause and then sent me off to check out my reference materials. I looked through the Pavlat/Swisher/Evans *Fanzine Index*, Greg Pickersgill's Memory Hole collection listing, Temple University's collection listing and a few other, more minor sources, and came up empty-handed. This leaves me to wonder just what zine Chris **really** saw.

CPG No. 8 – More interesting but comment-free Eric Mayer! Unfortunately, the same applies to the rest of the issue, too. Good reading, though, and nice Brad Foster illos for Eric's column. •

Eric Mayer

It didn't occur to me, when you first mentioned it, but the title you suggested for my column, "Notes From Byzantium," is oddly similar to "Notes From the Outside," the title I chose for my short-lived effort in Marty Cantor's *No Award*. I wrote less than a handful of those columns in the mid-eighties. The breeze from the ongoing TAFF flap was wafting me further and further from fandom. I felt as if I was outside of it all by then. Of course, I had never quite considered myself a full member of the faanish club. And I enjoyed hanging around the outskirts anyway, making only occasional forays into "focal point" zines. My plan had been to continue writing that column even though my interests were clearly turning elsewhere, but once I got deeply involved in doing small press comics and some professional writing there no longer seemed to be any point. To be fair, I have a talent for feeling like an outsider in any situation, so "Notes From Byzantium" would probably a good title, no mat-

ter what sort of publication it appeared in, signifying notes from a place that no longer exists, and in a sense, never did, the name having originated with the historians. Writing from a place like that you're always going to be writing from the outside.

Commenting on one's own stuff is hardly a LoC is it? I did enjoy the articles by Christopher Garcia and Dave Locke. It must be amazing to be in a position to run across strange little publications you'd never guessed existed. And Dave Locke's missing dates article was fascinating. I wonder if anyone has made use of those missing dates somehow? How could they be worked into a historical mystery? The fact that something was reputed to take place on a nonexistent date would be a great clue, except I think it would hardly be common knowledge and how could you give the reader that information (weird and striking as it is) without tipping your hand? Well, maybe it could be a clue from a parallel world where those dates did exist.

Lloyd Penny's LoC reminded me of my first visit to Canada. I had never left the country before. I was staring out the window of the bus after we'd passed the border, thinking, wow, so this is another country, yet it just looks the same. At which point I saw a **black** squirrel. Which I had never glimpsed before, or knew existed. Squirrels were grey! So it truly was an alien world after all. I spent a lot of time in the park admiring these amazing creatures which was the only sign I had that I really was in another place. •

Lloyd Penney

When Y2K loomed as an e-disaster for us all, I remember wondering aloud that once the year became that SFnal year 2000, would the world change overnight to resemble that of the Jetsons, with personal jetpacks and spaceships, and maybe wisecracking robot maids? Now that it's Y2K5, I wish even more for the land of the Jetsons. I wish more brainpower and money were going into science and space exploration, and less into video games.

Did any one ever think they'd reach the age they are? I'm a couple of weeks away from turning 46, and I'm alternately turning grey and balding.

I'm too fat, I need a new diet...all in all, I think I've become my father. That sound of distress you hear is me, running, screaming into the night. Or, maybe it's my father...

Mention of the space programme here means I can tell you that Yvonne yesterday morning took a plane to Washington to attend this year's International Space Development Conference. She works for one of the aerospace companies that will have a presence at the ISDC, but because she works in the accounting department, she is there on her own dime. She will be one of the many presenters at the conference, and she is also bidding to bring the ISDC to Toronto, most likely for 2008. I think space exploration is important to our knowledge of science, and while it would be great to have a human being doing the exploring, in true SF fashion, I think we'll have to make do with probes and robots. Spirit and Opportunity are doing tremendously well on the Martian surface right now, but I do wish it was human beings up there doing the digging and analyzing.

The local...think I'll just sit here and turn red from embarrassment. Should Chris Garcia come up to Toronto for Corflu next year, and I think he will, we shall have the proverbial Good Time. I'd say, Chris and Eric Mayer, go ahead and loc all the e-zines you can. All zines need the encouragement, and if people get tired of seeing the same three names in the local, they might be encouraged to respond themselves, just to break things up. That's the way it's supposed to work, anyway.

There are a number of zines I could name, this one among them, that have excellent layout qualities, and seeing that I took some classes in publication layout in school, I look for fresh ideas in layout, and I use them from time to time. There's been a couple of zines over the years that had great layout, and crappy content. The packaging can be pretty, but if the contents aren't any good, the whole product fails. If the writing is good, but the layout skills are lacking, just put it in a Word document, that's just fine for me. •

We Also Heard From: Not a blinkin' soul!