

THE DRINK TANK ISSUE 174
GARCIA@COMPUTERHISTORY.ORG

Another fantastic cover by Brianna Spacecat and Frank Wu! You gotta love those two!

Letter Graded Mail sent to garcia@computerhistory.org by my gentle readers

Let us begin with Mr. John Purcell!

What a cute widdle caricature of you on the cover of *Drink Tank* #173. He's actually kinda cuddly. Maybe you should market little Chris Garcia squeezable action figures, complete with accessories like miniature Gestetners, computer desk, Babbage Engine, and stacks of fanzines. You could also include clothing options, too: a pink bunny outfit, bass drum, cheerleader costume, pom-poms, and a "Chris 4 TAFF" sign. And if you order within the next 12 minutes...

I could totally see that! I think Martin Young came up with a similar idea a while back in some LASFS minutes. Of course, the important thing is that image is the Drink Tank drawing debut for Miko, who is now at FIDM in La and is seriously missed by yours truly and others.

Okay, that's enough of that frivolity. I think you get the idea.

I am attaching that "piece from



the excellent Mr. John Purcell" you alluded to in your first paragraph. Jumped the gun a bit there, didn't you? For a while there I was ego-scanning the zine, thinking, "Did I already finish that snake arkle for him?" Satisfying myself that I hadn't, I figured I better make you look suitably prescient and get it done for your zine. So here it is. Dang nice of me, ain't it?

I was just building suspense!

Taral Wayne has been doing a lot of writing lately, and this is A Good Thing. He even sent me an article and artwork without my asking, and I really can't wait to get the ninth issue of *Askance* done in the next week or so. This is also the Joe Lansdale issue, and things are looking really good so far. I am excited for the ish to be done, posted and printed.

I love Joe and I can't wait for the issue!

Back to Taral's article. This was amusing, and had me chuckling mightily. I could just picture this descendant telling the Voice in his head to fuck off. Ah, that was definitely something. Haven't you ever wanted to do that yourself? Admit it, Chris. You

know you have

Indeed I have.

You balanced off Taral's bit of whimsy with Frank Wu's thought-provoking commentary on pushing people's buttons. Everybody has a button that sets them off. I have yet to really notice what gets up a Chinaman's ass, but I'm sure there's something that people can say besides guiltng them into doing something. I always thought using guilt as a weapon was the forte of Yiddisher mammas. Of course, any mother can do this, but no-one can lay on the guilt like a good, old-fashioned Jewish mother. I know whereof I speak since I grew up in a heavily Jewish city (St. Louis Park, Minnesota) and had a lot of Jewish friends in school. Man, the things those dutiful sons would do for their mothers... All I could do was wag my head in amazement.

Well, let us not forget the Catholics...or the Armenians. I have witnessed the guiltng powers of both. And please, the accepted term is Asian-American.

At any rate, Frank made some really good points, especially about how we are supposed to describe

black people nowadays. I guess using the word “black” is okay again; if so, so be it. Sometimes I think political correctness has gone too far, which may be one of the sub-points Frank is making. It is a good little article, and Frank writes well. Like I said, it’s a good balance between the silly and the serious, which is tough to do sometimes in a zine. Good play there, Christopher.

I would claim that the Drink Tank is nothing if not a balance between the balance between the two...and the absurd.

OMG! You in a Speedo!?! (re: your comment in Lloyd Penney’s loc) My eyes are glazing over...can’t see...

I would never be caught dead in a speedo. Hell, I’m not even willing to wear a thong!

I don’t do costuming, never really have as a fan. On the other hand, I certainly can appreciate the hard work that folks put into them. At the most recent AggieCon there were some really good Cosplay costumes in the competition. Those things take time to produce, and if you’re good at that sort of thing, then go right ahead and enjoy it. This also reminds me of a report I saw on the Internet about the Furry Convention in Pittsburgh. It was actually kind of funny and the costumes were cute. At least, those



that were broadcast.

There are some very cute and fun costumes done by furies at various cons. I have to admit that the Fur Parade was a bunch of cheerful and awesome at FurCon this year.

And you finish with another article from that fan writing machine, James Bacon. I really don’t have much of note to say about it, but James certainly is one prolific fan writer. If he

keeps this up, he’s gonna end up on the short list for next year’s FAAn and Hugo awards for best fan writer. Mark my words: some day this shall come to pass.

I think he was on my ballot for both and was prominently noted on the Handicapping The Hugos Who Wasn’t On The Ballot section.

A solid issue, roomie. I enjoyed it a lot, and look forward to seeing more

from you. Take care, and keep them coming.

All the best,

John Purcell

Well, they may not be as frequent as they once were, but they're still coming out!

"Fuck that noise! Let's blow this joint!

-PG Wodehouse, 1918

And now, Mr. Eric Mayer!

Chris,

I suppose you realize that despite what you say in the editorial you didn't run an article by John Purcell. Okay, I'm getting pedantic and querulous which is even worse than garrulous and querulous. It's your zine. You are entitled to run what you want. You should have told us you were running articles by Willis, Burbee and Tucker also. That would have been even more entertaining!

Well, the Purcell article didn't come through in time, but it's in this issue. The Burbee article was rejected due to the many threatening statements it made against the UN and the Willis and Tucker collaration is in these pages, but it's very small.

I did like Frank Wu's article

though. What interesting stories. Oddly enough I don't have any bounty hunter stories. I do still recall one particular occasion when I was insulted, many years ago, by a debt collector. Yes, it is true, I once had some overdue bills. Dare I admit that publicly? Anyway, I got a phone call from a particularly nasty bill collector and at one point in his harangue he sneeringly said to me "This isn't kosher Mr Meyer." And I was crogged. I'm not Jewish but from my name, especially if you pronounce it wrong, I guess I seem Jewish and I suspect that part of this collector's procedure was to attack people that way. I was almost as offended as if I were Jewish. I wonder what line he had for blacks or Hispanics? Anyway, he is probably in hell now, up to his neck in boiling chicken soup.

I know that's a terrible thing, but reading that last sentence really makes me want some good soup.

It is strange how we've gone through different terms for blacks. Too bad we need any term. I had an elderly auntie who spoke about all the cute little pick-a-ninnies she saw while traveling through the south and she never thought anything was wrong with such an observation. (Can you believe it, Thunderbird knows how to spell "pick-a-ninny. It instructed me I needed dashes. I'm wondering about the racial implications. Is this good or bad? A sign of progress or not?) My

grandmother named one cat Blackie. Try calling that cat today in some part of the city.

Yeah, times hav changed...but spellcheckers are now being boycotted by the NAACP!

I suppose there is less racism in the country now but probably there's still enough to allow right wing zealot McCain to take over and continue the current administration's project to turn the USA into a police state. The democrats have always taken an optimistic view of the intelligence and decency of the average voter and have generally lost.

I don't think it'll happen. Obama will win, and there's a chance he could be assassinated by some schmuck who doesn't get that it's not 1955 anymore.

Love the cover image. You should use that again someplace definitely.

I think I shall...

This has been another mini-LoC (patent pending)

Best,

Eric

Thanks, Eric!

"Listen, if you don't knock that crap off right now, I will end you!

-Mother Theresa, 1979

And now...Lloyd Penney!!!

Dear Chris:

There's more Garciazines in the hopper... I've got number 172 and 173 of The Drink Tank to tackle right now.

I can't help myself. I just gotta write!

172...Who's the guy on the front cover, hm? He's so calm and grinning for the camera...If it wasn't for the beard, we wouldn't recognize you in that shot.

It's OK, I'm vibrating at a very high frequency to make up for the still exterior.

Wild parrots are great fun, and I've seen a few myself. I remember many years ago being in the San Diego Old Town area, and finding parrots left outside, bored and squawking. We came over to see them, they loved the attention, and they literally crawled all over us. The parrots in the picture look like the lorakeets that are native to the southern hemisphere, around Australia.

Lorakeets are nectar drinkers and sadly wouldn't survive long in this area, though the climate is right for them. There's a huge Lorakeet enclosure in the SF Zoo that's outdoors. They just have to have their nectar brought to them. They are colorful birds though!



173...You've got to use this illo on your LiveJournal. Happy happy, joy joy joy! Westercon has just finished, so I imagine you're resting up from another fun time. You've got to tell us all about it. I live in one part of the continent that doesn't have a regional convention like a Westercon to go to.

I am in fact much more rested than I was after BayCon or the last WorldCon I went to (when I was wrecked for something like a month). Maybe I will put it on my LJ, though more important is to get Miko to gimme more art!

Just because you've got a drawing of a Pegasus and a rainbow, this somehow makes you gay? Dude, you live in California. I would have thought that any kind of fantasy art would be an understood part of the

background. We've got fantasy art at home, too, and I have some cloisonné pins that have rainbows and unicorns and pegasi on them. I've got lots of gay friends, but that's one thing I don't have in common with them.

I don't have much fantasy art, though I own stuff from Frank Wu and a few others, and little of it is cutesy pie stuff. I would say that owning a painting like the one Evelyn bought would make me a 9 year old girl, which is exactly what Evelyn is!

When it comes to race, I prefer to think of the results of the completion of the coding of the human genome. That modern research firmly concluded that there is only one race, the human race. Doesn't matter if you're black, white, red, yellow or puce with chartreuse stripes. We're all human, but we can't get over the superficial differences. Same goes with religion or sexual orientation, or even gender. I suppose it's bred into us that in order to feel superior, we need to have someone to look down upon.

Yes, I long to live in a color-blind world where only the Cornish are looked down upon because they deserve it.

Chris, if you ever put a picture of you wearing a Speedo online...well, I could say the same thing about myself.

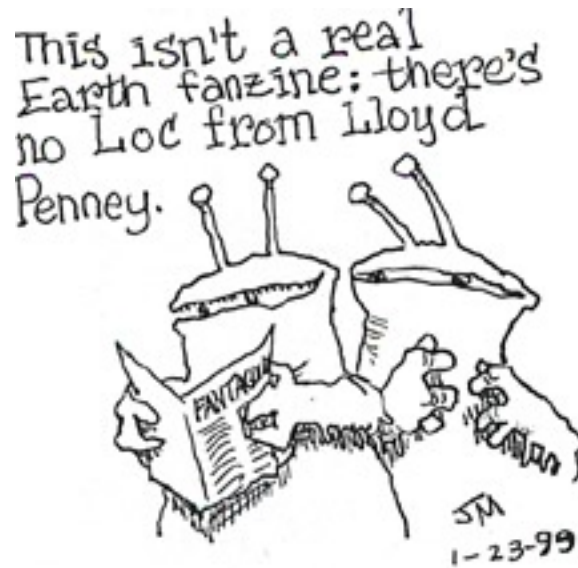
Me in a Speedo? Not without a laugh track...

I am allergic to speedonium, and thus I can not wear items made of them!

Our latest Diageo adventures... this past weekend, while you guys were watching fireworks rise, we were on the road to Amherstburg, Ontario. It's as far to the southwest in Ontario without hitting Michigan. We went for a tour of the Crown Royal bottling plant, and we watched the boxes with empty bottles move into the plant, the bottles and boxes separate, the bottles get labeled, filled, capped, bagged with those purple cloth bags, slipped into small boxes and 12 small boxes slipped into the big boxes from the start, and down a slope to the loading docks and trucks. The whole line we saw in operation was making the Crown Royal for the US market; the Canadian market gets a different line and packaging routine. This plant also bottles Schenley VO. I asked where is Crown Royal distilled? Gimli, Manitoba. Great little tour, and the rest of the weekend was spent with Windsor fan Molly Moo and her hubby.

There was a time when I could have made quite a quilt from the Crown Royal bags I had collected.

I will attach that Joe Mayhew cartoon... Hope you're right about me



being on the ballot, but I won't bet anything; I know you'll be there. Taral has been writing about the results of this year's Fan Aurora Awards, and he is advocating doing away with these fan awards, and all fan awards, for that matter.

I'm still not sure I'll make the list. I was shocked I made it this year. I think next year may be the year pros finally take over the complete ballot, but I said that about this year too. I like fan awards, and the FAAn awards as well.

Christian McGuire sees litfandom as tired as opposed to anime fandom, and I have to agree. Our own litcon uses other interests to get perhaps 700 people each year, and our local anime con hit 15,000 in

attendance. Even our local mediacon, Polaris (coming up this very weekend) looks a little tired. No use in wishing that things were the way they were, so we just have to move to wherever your interests lie, and that's why I've ramped up my involvement in fanzines over the past 10 years or so. However, there is always someone busy with other things...rumour has it that a new litcon will be launched in Toronto in 2010, so I'll keep my eyes open and see what's going on.

LitCons draw different crowds (for example, I have no doubt that I'd do very poorly at Readercon), but there are some that are very good. Anime cons draw because there's more anime being pushed more places. Do I think litfandom is tired? Maybe. Do I think that Anime fandom is more dynamic? Maybe, but really, the time through discovering Anime fandom to leaving it tends to be kinda short.

All done for the moment...I have SF/SFs to take care of. See you again soon!

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

Thanks, Lloyd!

"Dammit, my Popovers!

-Goethe, 1879

Snake-Wrangler Penny

By John Purcell

Life at the Purcell Petting Zoo is an unceasing adventure. For example, on the evening of Wednesday, June 18, 2008, there was a brief encounter between our daughter Penny, one of our Castle Keeps client's dogs, my wife, myself, our dog Pulcinella, and a 6-foot long rat snake curled up near our front door.

In short, Penny was taking Emily - that's the guest dog - out to the car when the dog barked VERY LOUDLY and whirled to the left, almost ripping the leash out of Penny's hand. My wife was right behind them, and the next thing I heard was Penny saying "Oh, shit! There's a snake under the chair!" Valerie shrieked, looked, then shrieked some more - "Oh, my God! Oh, my God! EEEEEKKKKK!!!! Sunuvabitch! I hate this motherfucking state!" - and then raced back inside, slamming the door behind her.

All that got my attention. So I put down the papers I was grading and went out to see Penny whacking under this bush with a big heavy branch that Daniel was carving into a walking stick, and *that's* when I saw this beastie slither very quickly across our sidewalk to hide in the brush that ran alongside the garage. I am afraid that the first thing I said wasn't very helpful: "Holy, shit! That's a



big snake!"

Penny and I both recognized it as a rat snake - harmless to us mere humans, but one of Mother Nature's best rodent catchers - by its coloring and head shape. Emily was quite entranced by it, and was content to bark at the snake. I am sure she had no idea what it was (she's only a 7-month old puppy - albeit quite large, being a golden retriever/pit bull mix), so she did the next best thing that only a confused, large puppy could do: bark her ass off.

Valerie sealed herself inside the house, deciding to let Penny and me take care of snaring and disposing of that snake. The first thing I did was go back into the house and fetch Pulcinella, who used to snag small snakes in our gardens up in Iowa and shake them to death. Granted, he's a little dog, but one with little fear, so I figured he might as well have a share in the fun of tracking down a snake that was 5 times longer.

Penny, in the meantime, had grabbed a flashlight and was poking that walking stick into the bushes, trying to force that rat snake out into the open where Emily could grab it. Wishful thinking, there. Emily had no idea what the heck this thing was, let alone wanting to *catch* it; her non-developed puppy mind had enough sense to back off something as strange and potentially dangerous as this lengthy reptile. I then grabbed a long-handled rake from the garage and positioned myself opposite Penny on the sidewalk. A few more pokes from the walking stick resulted in the snake slithering its head out of the undergrowth; I had the head pinned under the rake before Pulcinella even had a chance to yip at it, which he did as the snake's body coiled first around the rake handle, then around the walking stick as Penny jammed it underneath the snake and lifted.

Pulcinella constantly yipped at the snake dangling from the stick and rake. The snake flickered its tongue at Pulci, who quickly backed up without missing a loud, ear-drum piercing yip. The snake then completely wrapped itself around the walking stick and just hung there hissing a sibilant "what the fuck's going on here?" at us. With Pulci and Emily yipping and barking alongside her, Penny walked across the street to a storm drain and unceremoniously dumped the snake off the walking stick. A loud *kersplash!* echoed through the drain, which we knew

emptied way the heck downstream in a holding pond south of town.

“That should do it,” Penny announced, handing the walking stick to me. “Wait until Dan hears about this!”

“I’m glad he wasn’t here,” I said, “mainly because he’d probably want to keep it as a pet. And we don’t do snakes as pets.”

Penny nodded. “Yup. At least it’s gone now.”

“Try to convince your mother about that,” I said as I opened the front door, leading Penny and the dogs back inside. “Hey!” I announced to Valerie, who was cowering in the bedroom. “It’s gone!”

“GOOD!” came the retort from behind the door. “I am NOT coming out until the Pope’s gone skydiving over Poland.”

“Mom, I dumped it down the drain across the street,” Penny hollered. “It will be in Grimes County by morning. Besides, it was a rat snake; they’re harmless and serve a purpose.”

“I don’t care,” Valerie shouted back. “I’m NOT COMING OUT AGAIN THIS YEAR!”

“Would you rather have rats in the yard?” I countered.

“No. But at least we have cats that can take care of those things!”

Penny rolled her eyes, looked at me. “Yeah, our cats are such great

hunters.”

“Well,” I said, “at least Waldo is. He nails rats and birds and baby rabbits all the time.”

Penny’s eyes went wide in horror. “*Baby rabbits?!?*” she cried. “I don’t want to know that!”

“Sorry.” I meant it, too, since we used to have a rabbit when we lived up in Marshalltown, Iowa. My slip of the tongue struck a nerve. Seeking to make amends, I quickly added, “If it makes you feel any better, I can go get that rat snake back.”

“No thanks! I have had enough fun for one night.”

With that, Penny grabbed Emily’s leash and headed back out the front door. I couldn’t help but notice that she stopped and kept looking under every plant and chair as she led the dog out to the car.

Fearless, she is. My daughter, the snake wrangler.

“If there is one thing you can always count on, it’s the fact that I can kick you so hard, you’ll wake up dead!”

-Ghandi, 1938





**I'm Going To
Vegas, Vegas,
Vegas, Ne-Va-
Da, I'm go-
ing to Vegas
(deedle-deedle-
deedle-deedle,-
deet-deet)
Art by Jason
Schachat**

My Westercon? Busy. Very busy. Tiring. Exhausting. While I got more sleep than many other cons I've been to, I did more, ran around, had more troubles of the technological kind and also managed to find myself in the middle of a convention that rattled around in the hotel while also having such a good time that I'd be tempted to say that the con was a giant success. And maybe it was. Or maybe it's fandom being fandom. I'm not entirely sure. Actually I am: it's both.

Las Vegas is a stange town for a convention. So is New Orleans, but they had a World-Con there and folks had a good time while the con fell apart all around them. This wasn't that bad. Nowhere near that bad. The programming was pretty solid, actually. There were a couple of panels going at almost all times. There was a Fanzine Lounge that was jumping at times and at others was closed because no one was around. There was a Filk Lounge that I never made it to. There were some fun evening events, including a nice Elvis impersonation by Tadao Tomomatsu that was awesome, and also taught us that Vegas is a tough town because

the casino sent security looking for the guy doing the unlicensed Elvis act. That's a big deal. There was a masquerade, and it was very small with a really nice entry called The Scottish Play that was really funny.

But no matter how good the programming is, there was a serious problem: only 317 people made it to the con.

Now, there are lots of good cons in the 300 people range. In fact, some of my faves have been in that size, but there's also the fact that they planned this as a much bigger con, and putting on the kind of con you'd expect for 1000 people with only 300 people is tough. It can work, but often it feels over-programmed and even smaller than they really are. I figured about 500 people would show up, and I kinda planned my Lounge around those numbers. There were some folks who you don't always see at Westercons, like Mike Glycer and Steve and Sue Francis, and you had the normal folks like John Hertz and Elayne Pelz. You also had my little cadre of friends who I am so grateful to for giving me such a great time.

Oh yeah, and you had a lot of Vegas fandom. Lori Forbes, Merric, Lubov (who was the artist GoH), Woody Bernardi (who moved to Massachusetts a while back), Bill and Roxanne Mills. There was no Arnie or Joyce Katz. I knew they wouldn't be coming, but it was still kinda disappointing. There was a Vegrants meeting during the con, but Linda and I were doing our party so I couldn't make it out there. It was a

shame since I miss those fine folks. I gotta get out there again.

Linda and I drove down. I've never made the fast run to Vegas with another person in the car with me, but it worked out. Linda slept for a couple of hours when we were driving down. We left at 2:30am. She hadn't slept beforehand. I had gotten three or four hours, which is good because even with that sleep, there were some points where it was tough to keep driving. It was an 8 hour and 5 minute trip down. 540 miles in 8 hours and 5 minutes. A good time, one of my three best. Linda and I didn't kill each other, we listened to some NPR and a few CDs and both ways were pretty good. I love that darling.

Jason Schachat came out from the OC too. Jason's my pal and it's a good con when Jason and I get the chance to hang out. We've got a strange sort of dichotomy when we work. He's got a brilliant sense of timing and it plays off my general absurdist flow. Jason's good people.

And there was Leigh Ann, who speaks in riddles and rhymes. It's strange, but often she hides meaning under three or four layers of abstraction to conceal potential offence. It's probably a positive thing, but there are matters that

require that sort of delicacy. She's also charmingly robust drinking companion and one of those folks who can just talk about anything.

And there was Kevin and Andy. Those two are a blast. My two favourite fans (excluding Linda and maybe Jason) and they're a guaran-





teed party. We ended up enjoying the weekend's eating together at the Pub in the resort and we even enjoyed a lovely singing along with an Irish singer who was just about the most fun I've ever had. We sang along with songs like Whiskey in the Jar, Brown Eyed Girl, American Pie and my favourite: The Fairy Tale of New York, a Pogues classic. I love that song and Linda and I may have to Karaoke it someday. We just had a wonderful time!

And of course, Espana and Tadao and Christian and John Hertz and Milt Stevens and all those other great folks who came and we were happenin' the entire way.

And you can read more reviews of the convention in SF/SF and I'll even have some stuff to say there too. It's hard to say that the convention was bad. They set up a con and it was well-done in a good location. I'm not sure how much of the entertainment was because of the con though. I mean, the Match Games were a lot of fun, and that was a convention activity. The panels I was on weren't bad, though most were lightly attended. The Opening Ceremonies were fun, the dealer's room kinda small, as was the art show. One area I will certainly say the con did a great job in was the tribute to Walt Daugherty. It was simple, but it was nice to see the con recognising it.

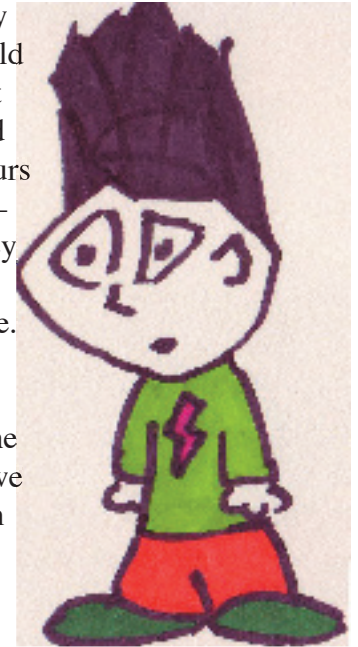
There was also the matter of the death of Bert, the bid treasurer for the Seattle bid. I know I'd met her, but she was one of the few members of the Seattle bid that I can't remember spending a fair bit of time chatting with. It was very sad. There was another famous crash on the road to a Westercon that put BJo in the hospital as I remember it. It's a sad thing and I am glad that Bobbi duFault wrote a nice little tribute to her for the Newszine.

And the newszine was a success and a failure in almost equal measures. I did the first issue with a tribute to Jack Speer (since the fatal accident didn't happen until the night after I finished the first issue) and some other fun stuff. I did about 200 of them, which was far too many. There were also about 75 of them that I did in color. I figured it would be best to print them in the Fanzine Lounge, since we had the printer and it worked. I managed to put out a very different issue for the second one. I thought the first one was really good stuff, and the second one was different and not nearly as bad as I thought it would be. The third one was smaller and not nearly as good, but it was packed with news and I didn't think it was bad. The fourth issue never happened. That is to say that I finished it, at 11:05 am on Sunday and was ready to print. I output it to PDF and then...

...something bad happened.

While i was exporting, the PDF became corrupted. And the original file I had created in InDesign had also become corrupted. I couldn't open it no matter what I tried. There was a backup, but the programme wouldn't open it either. I had no idea what happened and I tried everything, and had Linda try everything, to get

it to open. Eventually I found James and told him that I could do it in a few hours (it had taken me about 5 hours to put together everything (largely to rekey the pieces of paper folks had given to me. It's not finished and it was the worst case scenario. I did like the Point/Counterpoint we put out. It'll be up on eFanzines sooner or later.



I am sick and tired of all this bullcorn! - St. Joan of Arc

Ok, that's all for this issue. What else is in store for y'all? Well, I'm not sure I've got another issue I hope to have out next week and then one after that and then it's the games issue. I've got a lot of work to do on that one. The cover from Mo Starkey is just fantastic! All you EC Comics fans will enjoy it, I'm sure.

Art this issue was from Steve Stiles (After Botticelli), Jason Schachat (the art with my Vegas trip thing) and there's the cover from Brianna and Frank. I hope y'all will read the great stuff in Science Fiction / San Francisco.