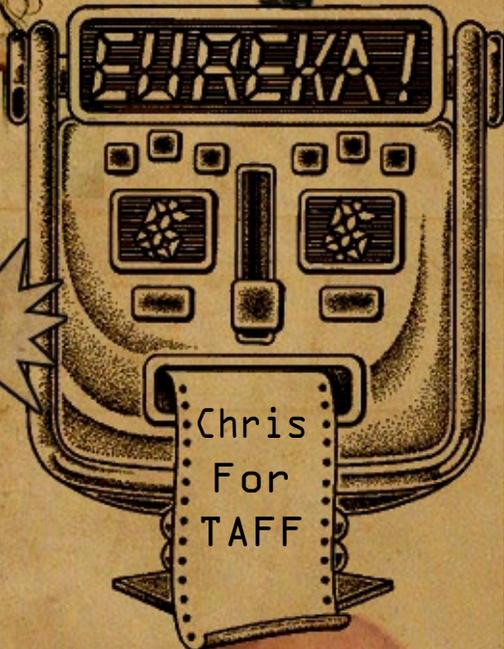
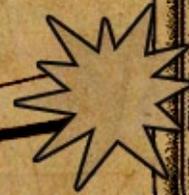
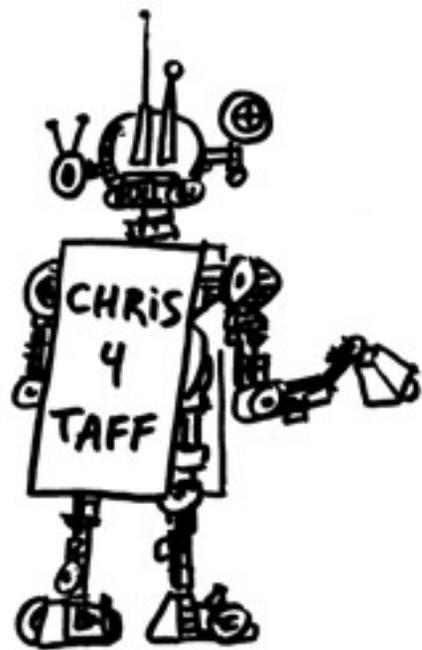


The Drink Tank Issue 87



VIC-20





What's All This About TAFF?

Of late, my main fannish concern has been getting ready to run for TAFF. I'm ready now, having gathered nominators that I'm proud to have on my ticket. There's Arnie and Joyce Katz, the wonderful people who introduced me to Vegas Fandom and have been so kind to me over the last year and a half. There's Good Ol' John Purcell, the editor of In A Prior Lifetime and a wonderful Letterhack. Let's not forget Frank Wu, who is doing several cartoon pieces for me, who's been a friend for years and is a great guy. On the UK side, there's John Nielsen Hall, a

former member of Rat Fandom and the current editor of Motorway Dreamer, a very good little zine. Peter Sullivan, the man who brought us FAFIA last year while in hospital, and a British version of Lloyd Penney in many respects, makes up the fifth arm of my Bi-Continental attack.

So, why am I running for TAFF? Why now? Just who in the Hell do I think I am? Well, there are good answers. I love British fandom and I'd love to get the chance to meet them. I've only met a few, LoCed a bunch of BritZines and read folks like Claire Brialey, Geneva Melzack, Niall Harrison and others pretty regularly. I'm happy that I've had a chance to write for folks out there and I think it would be a nice thing to be able to visit them and spread BArea fannish love. In fact, I'd be the first BArea to win TAFF since Robert Lichtman in 1989.

The Why Now? portion is more difficult. I'm pretty free right now. I'm not married (other than to the sea), I don't have a kid (other than Evelyn, who I lease) and my job can afford to be without me for a while in the Spring. Will that change in two years? It easily could. I figured that it was possibly now or never so I better damn well make it now. There are still complications (EasterCon is right in the middle of the busy film festival season, but I'll shift things around, I gotta find a way to make sure that Evelyn gets to

and from school while I'm away), but there's always ways to work around it. Work's even agreed to help me out and let me do some printing and campaigning from the office.

So, what do I plan to do? Well, the first thing is PrintZine, my TAFFzine that will be a short (probably 4 pages) zine that'll come out every few weeks and be sent to the good people in the UK mostly, but a few will make their way to people out here. I'll also be writing articles for various people and those marvelous folks who agreed to nominate me have pledged their support, which is wonderful to have.

So when do things start? Right now! If you'd like to help out by writing stuff for other zines, by pressing the flesh at WorldCon and by basically being out there. It's what's gonna happen.

So, how will this affect The Drink Tank? Well, I won't be doing much TAFFing here, maybe a little for flavour, but I'll also be slowing down a touch. I'll try and do an issue a week, but they may be smaller and I might skip a couple of weeks. In any event, it'll be something that'll take up some time.

So, let the race begin. I haven't heard of anyone else announcing, but that'll change. I hope Chaz runs again, as I think he could win. It would be weird though to have ordered my WorldCon ribbons from my opponent.

Letter-Graded Mail

sent to garcia@computerhistory.org

by my gentle readers

Let us begin with Lloyd Penney: The King of Men!!!

Dear Chris:

Another three issues of Drink Tank have piled up, so again it's catch-up time. This time around, it's 84 to 86.

84...I'm continuing to look for voicework through Mandy.com, and while some gigs have come up, I don't qualify for them, being neither female nor Korean. Still looking, and perhaps I can link up with an agent again. Once Bastards of Kirk comes out at Toronto Trek in about two weeks, maybe I can get you in touch with Logan Lubera, the \$-source for this movie, and perhaps he might like some Left Coast distribution.

I'd love to hear from him. Always looking for stuff to show at the various events I help run.

Ah, no more N3F president, and no more running for Mayor? You definitely need some new projects to replace them. Any ideas, O evil one? Hmmmm?

Well, TAFF's the reason for the two.

I wish I could have done more as N3F Pres, but various issues rose at various moments and I just don't think I did that well. Still, it was fun.

One waitress I like a lot is Margo at the Foxes' Den, where we have our main monthly pubnight. Margo started there many years ago as a waitress, and now she is the senior waitress and co-owner of the pub. I guess there's a lot of weightlifting involved, but I've seen so many waitresses with the usual muscular arms from lifting all those trays of food and drink. To see them run around, it's a regular workout just doing the job.

I've had a lot of folks tell me great waitress stories. I might be able to do a full issue someday on them. That's always a goal I can keep in mind. There used to be World Waiter (and Waitress) championships on ESPN 2, but I haven't seen them in years.

85...Ah, Fantasy Island...keep you eyes on the skies, Tattoo, they're looking for my secret source of Corinthian leather. One island I wanted to go to, but never did, was Mackinac Island in Michigan. It's where one of our favorite fantasy movies, Somewhere in Time, was filmed.

I always wanted to go up that way, but I've never made it. Somewhere

in Time is a damn fine film too.

LAcon IV has declared the official ribbon direction of the convention is horizontal, so I guess we've all been warned. I have a couple of vertical ribbons to bring with me, so I'll have to see how they react to them. Will the Ribbon Police let me off with a warning, or will I have to get my consulate involved in this?

I have a few Fanzinista ribbons and a bunch of Chris for TAFF ribbons that I'll be giving out. Everyone will get one (up to the first 200)

He's a ninja, she's a ninja, wouldn't you like to be a ninja, too? Dr. Pepper, drink Dr. Pepper...

Sadly, Ninja (the plural is also Ninja to hide their numbers) prefer Mr. Pibb. It's a West Coast thing.

86...quite a good letter from Ted White. You've reinvented fandom in your own image, Chris? Well, if you're not terrified, I sure am...EEEEEEK!

I haven't done it yet, but I am working on it.

Congrats to M and Jay on twins! They will fill your every waking moment, but you will enjoy it all. M may find it all a very erotic experience, given her predilections.

Sadly, the Finnish doctors she was

seeing missed a growth on one of her ovaries. She's had it removed, and they don't think it was cancerous, but they're still doing tests.

Chris Garcia for TAFF? Count on me for a nomination if you need it. And finally, during Gaylaxicon earlier this month in Toronto, Andy Tremblay accosted me as I sat in the dealers' room. "Are you the guy who keeps getting letters printed in Chris's zines?" Guilty as charged, m'lud...

At BASFA this week, Andy came to me and said "Guess what Chris, I met Lloyd Penney before you did!" Thanks for the offer of the nom. I've got a full slate so far, except I'm still waiting for Pete Sullivan to get back from Holiday to send his in!

I'm going to shut it down because I hear thunder outside. Take it easy, and see you in LA.

The hour grows ever closer, my friend. Ever closer!

Yours, Lloyd Penney

Sadly, Jim Baen, who had a stroke a couple of weeks back, has finally passed away. He was an important part of the SF publishing world and I hope that they find a way to keep BAEN running using his beliefs. Something tells me that may be incredibly difficult, but I hope someone tries.



I've been asked to write another article for other Magazine. This time, they want something on the film Nacho Libre. I loved the film, especially for the fact that it's a story about me. A Half-breed Mexican/Anglo guy leads a regular life and dreams of being a wrestler while pining for a woman he can never have (in Nacho's case a nun, in my case, the wily girl in the far cube). The fact that he becomes a wrestler under a mask is actually based on a wrestler of the 1970s and 80s is slightly beyond me, but still, it's interesting.

The weird fact is that Mexico is the second strongest country for wrestling. There's been a strong influence of Luchadors over the years, so much so that there are people who have altars to El Santo in their homes. The image I found above is too awesome, as I believe that's Santo on the 200 Peso bill. That's the sort of thing you see a lot of in Mexico, Santo in various paint-

ings (I've seen an amazing Last Supper rendition with Santo as Jesus, Blue Demon as Judas, Pierroth as Paul, Konnan as Simon, plus Ultimo Dragon, Latin Lover, Blue Panther, Tarzan Lopez, Octogon, Pentagon, El Sicoldico, Mil Mascaras, and others. I would have bought it if they would have taken less than fifty bucks. Alas, it was not meant to be.

If you are the slightest bit interested in the world of Masked Wrestlers, pick up the book Hoodtown. It's by Christa Faust and it's about an LA-like town where the slummiest of slums is Hoodtown: where the hookers wear hoods and where someone is murdering them.

The book combines sex, wrestling, violence, and the traditions of masked wrestling that goes back to the Aztecs. Christa Faust might also be the hottest writer ever to live. I mean she's freakin' incredible.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

by Frank Wu

Now that the “Guidolon the Giant Space Chicken” film is done, now, as Chris Garcia reminds me, now comes the hard part.

Selling it.

Financially, making the film was difficult but simple. All the money flowed in one direction, from me to (admittedly underpaid) artist-animators.

But asking people for money, that’s hard.

So we went to New York last week to the Licensing International Show to reverse the cash flow. This was one of the two highlights of my year (the other will be going to Nicaragua in October to go dig water wells, but that’s a different story). This was a huge trade show, with 20K attendees.

Disney was promoting “Fairies,” which is all about Tinkerbell’s friends. An enormous polar bear sculpture promoted “The Golden Compass,” and a 15-foot-tall Transformer (that cost 40K to build) promoted a new Transformer movie. (And, as a public service I warn you that the Care Bears are coming back, this time dancing to rap music.)

So... competing against all that, and the huge marketing and publicity machinery behind them, was us. “Us” also included Rodney Artiles (artist/



sculptor/visual consultant), BenniiD (who did 75% of the animation), and Chris Bell (our business manager with the MBA).

Our booth didn’t look like the others in the Art & Design Area. Other booths (10x10 with 8-foot-tall walls) were covered with a pandemonic frenzy of tiny images of characters or stock fotos available for licensing. We didn’t have any tiny images. We had seven-foot-tall plywood cut-outs of Guidolon, Trisuron and Takashi. I’d been warned that it would be easier/cheaper to make/transport the cut-outs if they were foamcore or cardboard. But

people were impressed by the fact that these were huge plywood things that could hurt them if they fell over. Several people asked, “Did you really paint those?” And I said, No, I didn’t, but one of my hired guns, Suzanne-Rachel Forbes did (it was, surprisingly, the third project in which she’d been asked to paint huge cartoon characters on big pieces of plywood). Despite having to saw these into pieces small enough to fit into my luggage and then lug them on a plane from California and then reassemble them in my dad’s garage in Connecticut (thanks, Baba!) and then load them into a rented SUV and struggle through NYC traffic to get them to the Jacob Javits center, it was worth it. People said “Wow!” or “Cool!” and I knew I’d made the right technical question.

In addition to the big plywood characters, we had a big flat-screen (rented at enormous expense) to show the animation, and several 14-inch-tall Guidolon sculptures (made by Rodney Artiles). The idea of the sculptures was to show toymakers Guido in 3D; they would also be given to our best prospects to sit on their desks to remind them to give us money.

But did the results justify all this effort and expense (it was around 15K total for the double-booth, the AV equipment, hotel rooms and travel for

everybody, the sculptures, the plywood characters, the van, etc.)

Answer: We don't know yet.

The advert for the trade show said that 86% of exhibitors made deals finished or started at the show. But would we be part of the remaining 14%?

Dena Fishbein of Dena Designs, who's been doing this for years, told me that it takes an average of 3 months for a contact made at the show to mature into an actual contract.

But contacts we made, and the most precious haul from the show was a small stack of business cards.

I will be a little coy, but we met folks from most of our primary targets. Reps from top cable networks (though we were told the folks we really needed to talk to would be at Comic-Con in San Diego). But we gave each person a copy of the animation, remembering what happened with "George Lucas in Love." That short got first into the hands of not George Lucas, but low-level peons, who liked it enough to pass it up to their bosses, who then passed it up and up the food chain, until it got to Steven Spielberg, who showed it to Lucas. And he loved it. And then the guys who made it got a film contract.

Maybe that can happen to us.

But there are no guarantees at these trade shows, so we made as many contacts as possible,



including some good hits at major toy companies. To one guy (whose card said "Business Development" - exactly what we want), I said, "We're in talks with development companies, and you might be more interested in us after we get a development contract." And he said, "We might be interested in you BEFORE you get a development deal." Yeah! He got a sculpture to take home.

Our biggest hit came from a major distributor of foreign animation. Two guys from that company came by. One called our project "interestingly

cheesy." The other guy came the next day and he sat and watched the entire 11-min. film and loved it! He smiled and laughed from one end to the other, and he even recognized "The Chicken Dance" song that we used. He said it was "destined to be a cult classic." Yeah! We'll see what happens.

But the question I was asked over and over - and here we start the philosophical part of this discussion - is: How flexible was I willing to be?

In other words, how would I

respond if someone wanted to buy or produce the project and take out my Shakespeare jokes and replace them with fart and poop jokes?

In other words, was I willing, if necessary, to sell out? Was I willing to sacrifice the integrity of the project for the all-mighty dollar?

Or... was I willing to sacrifice this particular project for money, so I could then take the money and start another project that we would NOT sell out with?

But... what does it profit a man to gain the world and lose his soul?

The issue still hasn't come up (no one's yet offered us a dump truck full of money), but I need to be psychologically prepared when and if it does.

In order to be prepared, I need to remember why I am doing this in the first place.

It's not about the money.

It has never been about the money.

Money is an illusion, a necessary evil - a way to pay artists and animators (the workman is worth the wages), to thank people for taking time and effort from their lives to help me with my vision. Money is a way, but not the only way, to make Good Things Happen.

A buddy of mine (Lisa, whose last name I don't know) told me about a guy, George Muller, who felt driven



by God to start an orphanage. He didn't have any money, so he did it anyway. One day the kids didn't have any milk, so they prayed for milk. And then a milk truck broke down right in front of the orphanage, and the guy got out and asked if they wanted the milk, because it was all going to spoil anyway? God provides.

I saw that sort of thing all throughout the making of the film.

I was struggling and struggling to draw wings on Guidolon, and then I sent a post to all the kindly artists who had sent me resumes. One chimed up

- Suzanne-Rachel - and said, Um, I did a whole book on birds.

Another time, Su-Ra came over to paint the plywood, and I showed her the action poses of Trisuron I was struggling and struggling with and she said, hey, you know I used to draw stuff just like that for comics - how 'bout you go do something else and I'll take a couple minutes and do these drawings for you?

All throughout production things just fell into place. Stumbling upon BenniiD and Jonah Gray, brilliant animators. And Dave Fleminger, who did magnificent sound and music and came on board only 'cos my first choice said he couldn't do it. And Dave was magnificent.

Coincidence? Perhaps, or divine intervention more like. Making the film has been a journey of faith.

So, if Guidolon is "meant to be", the money will appear. The film is funny - Guidolon may wind up selling himself. I've already knocked on the doors. Now is the time to wait, to trust the process, to trust God.

Money Is An Illusion.

We live in the Matrix. That which is real is not what we can see - the chair, the table. That which is real, that which survives, is that which cannot be seen: Love, Truth, Faith, Integrity.

Money Is An Illusion.

But what is my vision?

Guidolon, yes, he is a giant space chicken, but he is a symbol of the artistic struggle. The Guidolon movie is, at its core, not just about a giant space monster, but it is about the struggle with one's own self-esteem (too much or too little, often at the same time), about delusions of grandeur, about pride. It is, I hope, not just a good story, but a godly story, a morality play. A parable told not with Jesus and the disciples, but with giant space monsters.

For the week after coming back from New York, I'm off from work, so I can work on trying to sell this film (either as a co-production or development deal, or licensing the characters for toys/games/phone content, etc.). Also, for the first time in several months, I get to relax, unwind, and go see movies (saw three in the last three days).

The first was "Nacho Libre," a sweet sweet movie, which, like Guidolon, has hidden profundities. Nacho is a monk working with orphans who wants to be a wrestler. But "Nacho Libre" is as much about wrestling as "Chariots of Fire" is about running. Both are films about motivation. In "Chariots," we contrast Eric Lidell, who runs because "God made him fast" and because he thinks it's pleasing to the Lord. And we also have Harold Abraham, who runs out

of anger and pride and an outsider-mentality. Nacho starts as Harold Abraham and becomes Eric Lidell. He loves his monastery and loves the orphans, but he is tired of making slop to feed them all day. He wants to do something great, something memorable. At first he does this out of pride and envy (indeed, the writer of Ecclesiastes tells us that Nothing is ever accomplished except out of envy for one's neighbor). But he learns that he must wrestle to celebrate God and to help the orphans with his prize money.

And this is the lesson I must remember.

It's not about the money. (Though I've already earmarked some of the proceeds, if any, to go to helping a new friend, Steve Weeks, who's taking his family to Africa to set up a mission station and to dig water wells.)

It's never been about the money.



Even if this comes to nothing, and none of the contacts mature into contracts, I need to trust God and trust the process.

Not long after the trade show ended, I got an email from a company that was interested in us doing an evil chicken. But Rodney said, chickens are inherently good, and not evil. Yes, Guidolon may be dangerously excitable and uncontrollable obsessive, but he is essentially good. And while these people seemed eager to do business with us, other folks on the team (even folks who hadn't met them) were getting weird vibes from them.

So I had to tell the evil chicken people no.

I turned down their money.

I would rather go bankrupt, I decided, than to lose the integrity. There will be no evil chickens, no fart jokes, no poop jokes.

Worst case scenario at this point is that nothing happens, and we throw up our hands, and we all go back to doing what we were doing before. And eventually I pay off the remaining portion of the 35K I spent on the production budget. (Of course, as Judith Morel pointed out in Drink Tank #82, there are plenty of ways to go bankrupt AFTER you sell a TV show. But let's say for argument's sake that we never sell it, so that doesn't happen.)

In some ways, I'd rather have that

happen than to sell out.

Best case scenario: Ideally, what I'd love is that Guidolon became another "Veggie Tales." Or the "Frasier" of animation - with Shakespeare jokes, the kind of show that over-educated people watch 'cos they say it's the only show on TV that doesn't insult their intelligence.

But, barring that, as Lori Ann White points out, even if nothing happens, we have a really cool little film that we can all be proud of - something that's really funny and meaningful, and maybe even in its truncated, 11-minute form "destined to be a cult classic."

The struggle to teach a spiritual lesson, the struggle to reach artistic fulfillment, those are the important thing, not the success (however that is quantified).

Yes, I am Guidolon.
I am Nacho Libre.
Money Is An Illusion.
I am Free.



Letter-Graded Mail

sent to garcia@computerhistory.org
by my gentle readers

And Now, the Texas Nominator himself...John Purcell!!!

Well there, young feller, I see you got that loc from Ted White finally pubbed. I am very glad he re-sent it to you; one of the advantages of cyberfanac is that locs can be auto-saved to be either fixed and/or re-sent as the need arises. In your case, for some reason you never received the loc. There are any number of reasons for this happening, but all you had to do was ask Ted to re-send it if he had the loc saved in his sent file, and he could easily comply. Auto-save is also a great way to track your locs and see which ones get pubbed and, when they do, tell if they've been severely edited so as to be misinterpreted.

I blame it on our software called PANDA that blocks all sorts of things from coming through. Luckily, I massaged my settings recently.

Ted's loc is, as always, remarkable. His fannish career - and pro career, for that matter - have given him a perspective on just about any topic you care to raise. Since he is also a musician, Ted would be a marvelous contributor to that Rock and Roll issue you're planning. Count me in on that

one, too, but I can't help you on the Drugs issue; never got into the heavy shit, just drank a lot of bheer in my time.

That's funny; I did the heavy shit but never got into the bheer. The Rock 'n Roll Issue will be very interesting...

Which reminds me, as of this October it will have been 18 years since I gave up smoking, and really don't drink anymore. It has been years since I've been totally blotto. Funny how some things lose their appeal when you get married and have kids.

It's been ages since I got ripped myself (Cinequest closing night party a couple of years back) and I only briefly smoked.

So it appears that you plan issue topics ahead. That's something I rarely do, although theme issues can be a lot of fun to produce. Earl Kemp does a marvelous job along these lines, which means you're in good company, Chris. Keep up the good work.

I am nothing if not a planner. Earl does a great job with his themes, and even manages to squeeze in things that don't fit.

Oh, boy. Tenacious D is truly inspired fun music making. I love that song "Tribute" too. Thank you for

running the lyrics. I saw these guys play this song on a *MAD TV* re-run a while back, and it blew me away. Fun stuff. *School of Rock* is a fun movie, too. Jack Black is a decent guitar player.

I've been accused of being him, but I prove it by picking up a guitar and hard-core sucking.

Greg Kihn is writing horror stories? I didn't know that. I liked his music, but Weird Al's version of "Jeopardy" is even better. Something else I may have to check out some day. This list keeps getting longer by the day.

Yeah, his first book was called Horror Show and it was great. He's also a DJ up in these parts.

Congratulations to M and the birth of the twins! Glad to hear they are all doing well. Boy, will M have her hands full for quite a while.

Sadly, M's been going through treatment for a growth on one of her ovaries that's really taken some of the joy out of things. Still, Judith and SaBean are out with them and I'll run some photos in the next couple of issues.

I have heard of of but never read *Hollywood Babylon*, and the film resurfaces for air once in a great while, but again, I have never had the chance

to see it. (This is a classic example of someone who knows a little about a lot of things because he has never had the time to check out all of the things that interest him. I may have to clone myself for this purpose.) Thank you for the extensive write-up. Another item to add to the list.

I know exactly what you mean. I'm going to buy the second part today!

Ann Coulter is the sexiest woman I care to ignore. She is one of those Ultra-Conservatives who have no world vision; that is, they wear blinders to see only what they wish to see. Give me a moderate conservative who at least understands that someone else's viewpoint is valid. We live in a global society and we need people in positions of power who are at least willing to dialogue with others. Ann Coulter does not know the meaning of "dialogue". She'd rather yell over someone else's voice.

Sorry for the rant, Chris, but I can't stand extremist viewpoints, be they conservative or liberal or whatever. Extremists of any kind are dangerous. Personally, I am such a moderate independent it's nutty.

While I totally think she's a racist and hate her views, she does look good in a short skirt.

Hey, I will probably take you up on that offer of artist contacts. (*) The classic Dean Martin Roasts were

the best of that particular genre. My personal favorite ones were the roasts of Don Rickles, Frank Sinatra, and Johnny Carson. Great comedy. (*) You've got my teaching theory down pat. If I'm not a week ahead of my class, I run the risk of falling behind in grading, kind of like Lloyd Penney loccing fanzines!

The Jay Lake Roast at WorldCon may turn out to be better than I'd thought since some of the folks who are into it are hilarious.

And now it's official: CHRIS GARCIA FOR TAFF! You will be pleased to know that I have already sent in my nominating e-mail of you to Suzle. In fact, both of my next issues have plugs for you set up; *and furthermore #10* will probably have a brief nominating "speech" included which I will most likely reprint in *In A Prior Lifetime #13*. Good luck, young feller! If you win, I hereby request the right to pub part of your trip report.

My candidacy will do my nominators proud...especially if I manage to win!

Many thanks for a fine issue, laddie. See you in the funny pages.

All the best,

John Purcell