

IN A PRIOR LIFETIME

#3

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The third electronic installment from John Purcell

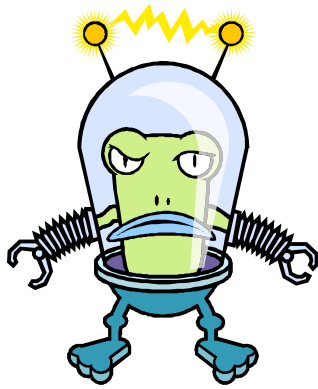
Preferred contact information:

jpurcell54@earthlink.net

Snail-mail received at: 3744 Marielene Circle
College Station, TX

77845

This zine is available by request, and is also available through Bill Burns' excellent website, efanzines.com. Go there often, browse, peruse, and enjoy.



As I have done for many a year, this zine, despite its newfangled format and distribution means, is STILL available if you send me

Don't piss me off, earthling!

Texas is in a subtropical geographic region, so the vast amounts of rain that have recently fallen have rendered our yard lake-like. I plan on stocking it with catfish.

when it rains in Texas...

What I have been up to lately

Not a whole heckuva lot lately. It is summertime, when public school teachers like me aren't teaching – but still getting paid, which is a nice switch from working at the ELI at Texas A&M University – so I've been taking classes towards my Doctorate in Education. My current projection for finishing that is 2007; one more year of coursework, then it's dissertation research and writing time. Oh, joy of joys! *That* will certainly keep me busy.

Other than that, I've been busy with family – my 8 year old son played in his first year of little league, which was fun, and daughter #2, Josie (13) tried out for competitive soccer but didn't make the team, and the older girl, Penny (19), has mostly been hanging around with her boyfriend Eric, who's a big hockey fan (this scored mucho points with me!) – and church (playing electric lead guitar for a change). It's been interesting and fun. And I really can't wait for the school year to start up again. The curriculum and instruction classes I've been in have given me great ideas for the high school classroom.

Another thing that has taken up a lot of time this summer has been rearranging rooms, getting them painted, sorting through tons of old clothing, games, toys, and other stuff to give away to Twin Cities Mission (as in Bryan/College Station, not the *real* Twin Cities of Mipple-Stipple). The main idea is to finish the girls' room, get their furniture back in there in a way that makes it functional and visually appealing, so that we can have our living and dining rooms back for family usage, not as bedrooms for Penny and Josie. My wife and I can't wait to reclaim these rooms for their proper functions, to say nothing of being able to get around and through those rooms. The living room has a tiny jungle path winding through the massed

piles of teenaged girls' junk piled hither and thither. It truly is a mess to behold.

But their room is going to be truly cool when done. The main décor is sky-blue walls and ceiling with clouds hand-painted on. My wife Valerie painted a sun centered on the ceiling fan with burnt orange flames spewing out from the core, and the fan blades have already been painted a matching burnt orange, too. The glow-in-the-dark stars have yet to be applied, and once the deep, royal blue floor sets – we pulled up the carpeting and painted the concrete – we'll move in the beds and all the other stuff.

Unfortunately, it could be another week before it's all done. *Sigh* Another week of wending our way through the narrow swath of floor space in our living room.

OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO

DUST FROM THE ATTIC REDUX

In the previous incarnation of this e-zine, I promised in the loccol to begin a reminiscence of my friendship with the late Lee Pelton. For those of you who may not know who Lee was, and what his role in fandom was, Lee Pelton was co-editor of *RUNE* with Carol Kennedy for a couple years back in the late 1970's. Their issues were full of fine fan writing and art culled from the best fans of that era, many of whom are still alive. Lee was quite active as a convention fan as well, besides being a faned of personalzines and worked on quite a few late 70's Minicons as the film committee head (I worked with Lee on these with Steve Glennon). Those were great days, full of fun and that good, old fashioned Sensawondah.

But my friendship with Lee began a number of years before that magical year of 1973. See, when I was high school in St. Louis Park, Minnesota, my brother and I played in the Pony/Colt Baseball League with Keith Pelton, Lee's younger brother. Through Keith, I first met Lee on the baseball field. And that's where the story began.



Not an actual picture of Lee Pelton, but close in spirit.

That was a few years before I re-met Lee through my best friend in high school, Steve Glennon. When Steve and I were freshmen in college, we used to compare notes on the books we had recently acquired, a hangover trend from our high school days when we used to take a Saturday book-run through a half-dozen or so used bookstores in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Steve and I were collegiately separated by about 265 miles of Minnesota wilderness; he was at the University of Minnesota, Mpls, while I was attending Concordia College up in Moorhead, MN. We had an unstated race to see which one of us would reach the 2,000 book plateau first.

Part of Steve's daily routine on his way to classes at the Multiversity of Minn., during the 1972 – 73 school year was to stop in at Shinder's Bookstore on the corner of Hennepin Avenue and 6th Street and check out the newly arrived comics and books. As it turned out, this was one of those fortuitous events that eventually changed our lives. By early '73, Steve had begun talking to the guy who covered the checkout next to the science fiction, fantasy, and mystery racks in the store. Yes, you guessed it, that guy was Lee Pelton. In Steve's letters and phone calls to me he told me about Lee, whom I remembered from my Colt Baseball League days of four years earlier. Well, as it turned out, Lee had noticed a flyer that someone had affixed to the front door of Shinder's and back at the sf & f counter, and said flyer was about this local science fiction convention that neither Lee, Steve, or I had heard of: Minicon 7. This flyer mentioned authors, movies, fun, and – most importantly – books for sale! Holy Moley, Batman, but that was the clincher for us. This convention was over the Easter weekend at the now long-gone but not forgotten Hyatt Lodge. As it turned out, I would be home from Concordia for a week-long Easter break. So we figured, what the heck; let's go to this thing and check it out. We all decided to meet some authors, get autographs, and buy some books on Saturday afternoon, and then go home. Nothing more.

Yah, sure. We were going only for the books. Famous last words.

The problem was, Lee decided to stay later than Steve and I, mainly because he was an old fart of 26 and Steve and I were 19 year old young pups. Lee had heard of this thing called a "con suite" – whatever that was – and wanted to check it out. Steve and I said, "Sure, whatever. Tell us all about it tomorrow

when we come back for more books." Boy, were *we* for a shocking revelation come Sunday afternoon!



Lee spotted us from across the huckster room and came charging at us like a love-starved rhinoceros in heat that had finally figured out why it felt that way. His eyes were wide and bug-eyed with something that Steve and I had never seen before. This was our first encounter with someone who had experienced a fannish epiphany: pure, unadulterated, 100% USDA graded and approved goshwhowsensawondah.

The words tumbled out of Lee's mouth at hundreds of miles a minute, colliding and bouncing off of each other as if a gigantic bag of verbal marbles had been opened upside down. "Guys!! Man, am I glad you're here! Boy, the things I saw...Hey, it's like, man, it's.. I gotta tell ya, it's so freakin' unbelievable....l...l...party...people, great music, really cool people to talk to, and some of them weren't even wearing clothes! And you gotta see the films they got here and it's all for free --- FREEE FOOD AND DRINKS!!!! – AND IT WENT ON ALL NIGHT LONG!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I haven't even been to sleep yet!! IT WAS FAN-FREAKIN'-TASTIC GREAT!!!!!"

Steve and I had no idea what Lee was babbling about. Yes, the poor man was obviously sleep-deprived --- and sleep-depraved, for that matter – and, truth be told, we were very curious about the cause of Lee's dementia. So, we hung around for the

afternoon and on into Sunday evening so that we could check out this "con suite" and see what magical power it possessed.

And that is basically how Lee Pelton, Steve Glennon, and I all had our first encounter with science fiction fandom: Easter weekend of 1973, Minicon 7 at the Hyatt Lodge in downtown Minneapolis. I just checked Fred Levy Haskell's brief history of Minicon on the Minn-stf website, and the attendance was 220 with the Pro Guest of Honor Larry Niven, and Rusty Hevelin was Fan GoH.

Whow, that was a long time ago. It seems like a lifetime ago, as well. In a way it *was* a lifetime ago. Since the last convention I actually attended as a member – Minicon 27 (1992) – my life has simply moved off into other directions, which doesn't place any disparaging viewpoints of mine on fandom. I have very fond memories of my time as an active fan through cons, Minn-stf meetings, fan pubbing, apas, and all the accoutrements of being a faaan. Without question, my life was forever changed by Minicon 7, and that would not have been possible without Steve hooking up with Lee at Shinder's and telling me all about this Minicon thing-a-ma-jig. I cannot imagine what my life would have been like without Lee literally free-falling into my life. The fact that he's been gone for over ten years now has only dulled his loss, but has never dimmed the memories I have of Lee.

But the story doesn't end there. Not by a long shot. Wait until I start telling you folks about the RUNE years, the Minicon film committee years when Lee, Steve, and I *were* the committee, to say nothing of the New Year's Eve Party in the Phoenix Building, the all

night music parties... Gads, but the list is nearly endless.

Like I said, my time in fandom has blessed me with many fond memories. My goal is to recount some of them in this minor little e-zine.

Hey, gang...

Don't forget e-mails and regular snail mail are welcome here. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future. Keep cool, and may your lives be blessed with many years filled with wonderful memories.

John Purcell

This fanzine is dedicated to the memory of the following friends:

Lee Pelton

Scott Imes

George "Lan" Laskowski

Harry Warner, Jr.