



Brought to you by: K.D. Wentworth, Uncle Guido and Simon McCaffery

**Special "Oh Yeah, Well Who Didn't Build
a Pod Racer When They Were Six?"
Issue • June 1999**

***** HELLO, OSFW! *****

The June meeting will be Friday, June 11th, at 7:00 P.M., at the Cyber Cafe in McFarlin Library at the University of Tulsa. Since the library is closed by 7:00 P.M., we will keep the door open until 7:30 P.M., then go downstairs to the cafe. If you arrive after 7:30, use the buzzer to alert us to let you in. Rob O'Bar will be this month's host and will provide plates, cups, napkins, and ice. The rest of the goodies will be up to the membership and there will also be snacks and drinks available in vending machines.

The meeting will be held. Directions: Drive down Harvard to 5th Place and turn west. Park in the parking lot at the end of the street, even though it says it's limited to cars with campus permits. The library will be west, ahead of you on your left. Walk around to the south door and enter there. For further information or directions, call K.D. Wentworth at 523-9729.

*****UNLOCAL NEWS*****

It looks as though Barnes & Noble will not buy major book distributor Ingrams after all, which would have been very bad for writers. SFWA and many other writers organizations went to Washington, D.C., and lobbied hard against this action.

***** LOCAL NEWS *****

Conestoga '99 will take place at the Sheraton Tulsa, June 25-27. Guests of Honor are Harry Turtledove, Barbara Hambly, Gardner Dozois, George Alec Effinger, David Lee Anderson, and Keith Stokes. Two tracks of programming will start on Friday at 2:00, including a

writers' workshop taught by Algis Budrys, 2:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. The cost is \$10 for Friday, \$15 for Saturday, \$10 for Sunday, or \$25 for the entire weekend.

The BIG NEWS last month, for those of you who were not able to make it to the meeting is that Paul Batteiger won 2nd place in the latest quarter of the WRITERS OF THE FUTURE CONTEST. His prize is \$750, along with an additional payment for appearing in the anthology. He will also receive a free trip to a week-long workshop in California and the awards ceremonies next year.

In other BIG NEWS, Paula Blais Gorgas sold her sf romance novel DREAMTIME to Starlight Writer Publications. The book is tentatively scheduled for release in early 2000 from www.starpublications.com. Congratulations, Paula!

Simon McCaffery sold his story "Wave Good-bye" to HITCHCOCK'S.

K D. Wentworth's story "Hallah Iron-Thighs and the Five Unseemly Sorrows" was published in CHICKS AND CHAINED MALES.

***** GOOD REJECTIONS *****

KDW: WEIRD TALES

***** THE ICE PICK *****

by Diana Carolyn Ice

THE ELEMENTS OF STYLE by William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White. 3rd ed. New York: Macmillan, 1979. ISBN 0-02-418200-1.

While it may be true that you can never be too rich or too thin; it is certainly true that you can never have too many dictionaries or too many grammar books (or cookbooks,

but that is another story). This is because none of the dictionaries—even the so-called unabridged ones—can contain every possible word, nor can any of the grammar books foresee every possible need. Therefore, what you can't find in one book, you may find in another.

However, if you can have only one grammar book, this is the one to have. Composed of "seven rules of usage, eleven principals of composition, a few matters of form, and a list of words and expressions commonly misused," Strunk and White, as it is commonly known, is the classic work on the fundamentals of plain English style, usage, punctuation, and grammar.

Relatively inexpensive, at \$5.95 for the paperback edition, almost everyone can afford to purchase this excellent book. And in less than one hundred pages, it covers the basics with accuracy, clarity, brevity, and wit, which makes the rules easy to understand and to remember.

For example, in the discussion on the use of shall and will, Strunk writes, "In formal writing, the future tense requires shall for the first person, will for the second and third. The formula to express the speaker's belief regarding his future action or state is I shall; I will expresses his determination or his consent. A swimmer in distress cries, 'I shall drown; no one will save me!' A suicide puts it the other way: I will drown; no one shall save me!" In relaxed speech, however, the words shall and will are seldom used precisely; our ear guides us or fails to guide us, as the case may be, and we are quite likely to drown when we want to survive and survive when we want to drown."

Quick to acknowledge the fallacy of inflexibility and the danger of doctrine, Professor Strunk says, "It is an old observation, that the best of writers sometimes disregard the rules of rhetoric. When they do so, however, the reader will usually find in the sentence some compensating merit, attained at the cost of the violation. Unless he is certain of doing as well, he will probably do best to follow the rules."

The later printings of the third edition have an excellent index, the lack of which was my only complaint about the earlier versions of the book.

It is the sort of book you can quickly read through, and yet find some bit of gold in it every time you re-read it. And if you master Strunk and White and faithfully adhere to their tenets, you cannot go wrong.

"Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts. This requires not that the writer make all his sentences short, or that he avoid all detail and treat his subjects only in outline, but that every word tell."

And that is good advice for us all.

*** CONTINUUM ***

April, 1999

by KDW

I forgot to count heads at the April meeting, but we had more works to read than we had time, if that gives you any idea of the attendance. Harold Chester got the prize for having driven the farthest. Sammie Dog got the prize for being the biggest and most annoying dog. The goodies table was loaded down and we read until almost midnight.

Harold: Harold read "Amaki and the Great Awabi," the story of a middle-aged pearl diver who takes a young and vigorous lover. I liked the rich mythical atmosphere, which included an abalone god, helpful dolphins, and the ghost of the diver's husband. The Asian setting was unusual and cried out for further exploration.

Brad: Brad read "Incident," about a writer who encounters his most famous character during a low period in his life following the death of his wife. I liked the gentle, ironic tone and the plot twist when, later, his character, Logan, becomes enamored of his new lady love's fictional character, Serena.

Paul: Paul read "The Glory of the Ravens," an epic-style fantasy about a snarling antihero, who begins in infamy, stealing the leadership of the Brotherhood of the White Sword, but then ends with a magnificent self-sacrifice. I liked the menace of the dragon, huge beyond almost imagining, and the richly imagined setting (the Dragon Sea, a Jubilee Year, an emperor who had ruled 151 years).

Greg: Greg read "I Was a Teenaged Elf," the story of an injured boy who is trapped in a virtual world as an elf until his body heals. I found the idea of a therapeutic virtual reality intriguing. It would certainly be a much better way to recuperate from serious illness!

*** CONTINUUM ***

May, 1999

by KDW

We had ten at our first meeting at the McFarlin Cybercafe. The space worked well for us. There were lots of tables we could push together and these cunning little chili lights on the ceiling. For anyone who got bored, there were computers nearby for logging onto the Internet. There were, of course, no dogs, but not everyone found that a detriment. Little Debbie's abounded and we read ourselves hoarse.

Paul: Paul read the first chapter of a novella. I would tell you the name, but I can't read my handwriting (!). The story takes place in the far future on a distant planet in a garden that produces "the nectar of a life" and is the one sheltered place on an otherwise dead planet. The plot

revolves around a girl, made only from her father's flesh and given control of the marvelous tree of life in the garden before she was born, and her servant. Though it seems like paradise to the girl and her father, the workers are not contented and soon revolt. The language was very vivid, the garden, with its exotic flowers and tree, compelling, and the sense of tension very strong.

Rob: In Chapter Eight of "The Jerkin Ripper," Raymond and Robert have fled Robert's mother and are now living together in a distant town. Raymond pulls off a theft and for a while they live extremely well, but then the money runs out and economic necessity forces Raymond's darker side to surface. I liked the sure voice of the narrative and the careful, thorough delineation of character. The reader/listener was left with a sense of disquiet as Raymond decides to teach Robert how to pick pockets.

KDW: KDW read the second half of "Coldfire."

*** HELP FIND ET ***

WASHINGTON (May 19) - Want to help in the search for ET? The chance comes Monday, when a screensaver that allows home computers to help crunch space data becomes available.

A team at the University of California at Berkeley developed the program, in which the capacity of thousands of idle computers — they hope — can be enlisted to help analyze the results from the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) project.

"With SETI+home, anyone, anywhere could be the person who helps discover intelligent life elsewhere in the universe," said Louis Friedman, executive director of the Planetary Society.

The project uses a screensaver that users download and install on their home computers. When the computers are not in active use and go into "screensaver" mode, the program goes to work analyzing the data gathered by the actual SETI program.

The data comes from the radio telescope at Arecibo in Puerto Rico, which is searching for possible alien signals. The home computers will search through the data for any radio signals that appear to have been made artificially, as opposed to the noise made by stars, space dust and other objects.

"If such a signal is found using the SETI+home program, the person whose computer crunched that vital bit of data will go down in history as helping to forever alter humanity's view of our place in the universe," the SETI project statement said.

The program imports SETI data from the Internet for processing. The program automatically dials into the project to download data and to send back each analyzed batch. The computer owner does nothing at all.

The Planetary Society said 400,000 people had already signed up to receive the screensaver program once it becomes available.

There are two sites where users can sign up — <http://planetary.org> or <http://setiathome.ssl.berkeley.edu>.

*** JURASSIC FARCE ***

Paleoanthropology Division
Smithsonian Institute
207 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20078

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your latest submission to the Institute, labeled "211-D, layer seven, next to the clothesline post, Hominid skull." We have given this specimen a careful and detailed examination, and regret to inform you that we disagree with your theory that it represents "conclusive proof of the presence of Early Man in Charleston County two million years ago." Rather, it appears that what you have found is the head of a Barbie doll, of the variety one of our staff, who has small children, believes to be the "Malibu Barbie". It is evident that you have given a great deal of thought to the analysis of this specimen, and you may be quite certain that those of us who are familiar with your prior work in the field were loathe to come to contradiction with your findings. However, we do feel that there are a number of physical attributes of the specimen which might have tipped you off to its modern origin:

The material is molded plastic. Ancient hominid remains are typically fossilized bone.

The cranial capacity of the specimen is approximately 9 cubic centimeters, well below the threshold of even the earliest identified proto-hominids.

The dentition pattern evident on the "skull" is more consistent with the common domesticated dog than it is with the "ravenous man-eating Pliocene clams" you speculate roamed the wetlands during that time. This latter finding is certainly one of the most intriguing hypotheses you have submitted in your history with this institution, but the evidence seems to weigh rather heavily against it. Without going into too much detail, let us say that.

The specimen looks like the head of a Barbie doll that a dog has chewed on.

Clams don't have teeth.

It is with feelings tinged with melancholy that we must deny your request to have the specimen carbon dated. This is partially due to the heavy load our lab must bear in its normal operation, and partly due to carbon dating's

notorious inaccuracy in fossils of recent geologic record. To the best of our knowledge, no Barbie dolls were produced prior to 1956 AD, and carbon dating is likely to produce wildly inaccurate results. Sadly, we must also deny your request that we approach the National Science Foundation's Phylogeny Department with the concept of assigning your specimen the scientific name "Australopithecus spiff-arino." Speaking personally, I, for one, fought tenaciously for the acceptance of your proposed taxonomy, but was ultimately voted down because the species name you selected was hyphenated, and didn't really sound like it might be Latin. However, we gladly accept your generous donation of this fascinating specimen to the museum.

While it is undoubtedly not a hominid fossil, it is, nonetheless, yet another riveting example of the great body of work you seem to accumulate here so effortlessly. You should know that our Director has reserved a special shelf in his own office for the display of the specimens you have previously submitted to the Institution, and the entire staff speculates daily on what you will happen upon next in your digs at the site you have discovered in your back yard.

We eagerly anticipate your trip to our nation's capital that you proposed in your last letter, and several of us are pressing the Director to pay for it. We are particularly interested in hearing you expand on your theories surrounding the "trans-positatingfillifitation of ferrous ions in a structural matrix" that makes the excellent juvenile Tyrannosaurus rex femur you recently discovered take on the deceptive appearance of a rusty 9-mm Sears Craftsman automotive crescent wrench.

Yours in Science,
Harvey Rowe
Curator, Antiquities

*** MARKET UPDATE ***

CHANGES

Sue Weinlein Cook is now Managing Editor at AMAZING. Kim Mohan has been promoted to Editor-in-Chief.

FANTASY MACABRE is "currently in non-publishing mode."

OUTSIDE: SPECULATIVE AND DARK FICTION is now publishing monthly.

BARDIC RUNES is dead.

Next year's SWORD AND SORCERESS 18 will be invitation only.

NEW LISTINGS

DEAD CELEBRITIES, 11659 Doverwood Drive,

Riverside, CA 92505-3216. Editor: G. Michael Short. New webzine buying h/s/f/mystery/humor. Payment: \$1-\$20. Length: None mentioned. "Submit pieces less than 250 words via e-mail (editor@deadcelebrities.net), longer work via snail-mail."

DEAD PROMISES, 3420 Salem Dr., Rochester Hills, MI 48306. Editor: Jane Hubbard. Civil War ghost stories or ghost stories relating to that era. "No unnecessary violence or gore." Length: up to 7,000 words. Payment: 3 cents/word.

EVEN MORE MONSTERS FROM MEMPHIS, 44 N. Second St., Suite 1000, Memphis, TN 38103-2220. Editor: Beecher Smith. Anthology of h/s/f/df. "Looking for gut-wrenching, spine-chilling, can't-get-back-to-sleep-without-a-light-on horror that grabs you and won't let go . . . The story must either be set in Memphis or have strong connections with it. . . must have a monster or at least elements of the supernatural which are germane to the story." Buys one-time rights. Length: 1,000-10,000 words (prefers 3500). Payment: 1/2-6 cents/word, "depending on the writer (unknown beginner or well-recognized professional). Include prior credits with submission." \$15_reading_fee (for which applicant will receive a copy of book when published whether or not submission is accepted) must accompany each manuscript. Fee is waived for members in current good standing in HWA or SFWA. Deadline: 9/30/99. Return time: varies.

MIDNIGHT HOUR will debut as a new slick horror quarterly sold on the newsstand. It's not open yet but will be paying professional rates.

VIRTUAL LOBOTOMY, 1959 N. Peace Haven Rd. #317, Winston-Salem, NC 27106-4850. Editor: Mr. Jon Hodges. E-zine buying df/h. Length: up to 7,000 words. Wants "psychological horror that causes nightmares, second glances, or a rapid heart beat, not fiction about vampires, werewolves, strange bloodling creatures, or anything else fictitious, wants horror that can and does happen . . . include cover letter with credits and your definition of horror." Payment: 1 cent/word upon publication. E-mail: virtual_lobotomy@blindsided.net.

SELECTED PRO MARKETS

ANALOG, 475 Park Avenue South, 11th Floor, New York, New York 10016. Editor: Stanley Schmidt. Currently reading all lengths. Payment: 6-8 cents/word up to 7,500 words; \$430-520 for 7,500-12,500 words; 5-6 cents per word for longer material. Wants sf with strong characters in believable future or alien setting. Reporting time: 1 month, often less.

ASIMOV'S SF MAGAZINE, 475 Park Ave. South, 11th Flr., New York, NY 10016. Editor: Gardner Dozois. Buying sf and fantasy up to 20,000 words (very few longer). Dozois recently said on Genie that he wants "tight" stories in which every scene, ideally every word, serves to either drive the plot or establish character or

setting in some essential way, or perhaps both. He wants to see more hard science and also more good offworld, alien planet, spaceship, or good literate space opera fiction—"something with some color and sweep and action and exoticism." Payment: 6-8 cents/word to 7,500 words; \$450-600 to 12,500 words, 5 cents/word for longer stories. Reporting time: 4-6 weeks up to six months.

BOYS LIFE, Box 152079, Irving, TX 75015-2079. Regular Features Editor: Kathleen DaGroomes. Buys humor, mysteries, sf, and adventure fiction up to 1,500 words. "All stories must feature a boy or boys." Payment: \$750+ on acceptance for 1-time rights. Sends 6 contributor's copies. Reporting time: 1-2 months. Guidelines available.

CICADA, 315 Fifth St., P.O. Box 300, Peru, IL 61354-0300. Associate Editor: John Allen. A publication from the same group which produces CRICKET, meant for the 14-19 age group. Buying "realistic, gritty, dramatic fiction, sf/f, mystery, adventure, historical, romance. Can be a little rebellious and a little hip, but not too hip. Protagonist may be teen or adult. Looking for things in the style of Bruce Coville and Phillip Pullman." Will run one story 10,000-15,000 words in each issue. Other stories should be 5,000-7,000 words. Payment: 25 cents/word for one-time rights.

DRAGON MAGAZINE, 1801 Lind Avenue SW, Renton, WA 98055. Editor: Dave Gross. Length: 1,500-8,000 words. Pays 5-8 cents/word on acceptance for First Worldwide Serial Rights in English. 2 contributor's copies. Wants fantasy with interesting characters and strong plots. Would prefer not to receive stories dealing with D&D monsters and characters. "There is an entire genre of fantasy to explore beyond sword and sorcery." Wants stories with strong fantasy elements that move fairly quickly. The editor has no objections to female protagonists, but "can't use stories in which female sensibilities dominate." Wants stories with strong fantasy elements that move fairly quickly. Only publishing solicited game-related fiction for the rest of the year. Reporting time: 4-6 weeks. Sample: \$4. Guidelines available.

FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION, P.O. Box 249, New York City, NY 10159-1806. Editor: Gordon Van Gelder. Current needs: all lengths and types of fantasy/sf—especially sf under 10,000 words. "I like to see writers taking chances and I'll usually follow them whether they go into the slipstream or rethinking a classic theme . . . I read a lot of 'New Wave' writers like Ballard and Delany when I was younger and they influenced me a lot, but I also like a good ol' skiffy story just as much when it's done well." Payment: 5-7 cents/word. Reporting time: 6-12 weeks.

HITCHCOCK'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE, 475 Park Avenue South, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10016. Editor: Cathleen Jordan. Well-plotted, plausible mystery, suspense, detection, and crime stories. Length: up to 14,000 words. "Ghost stories, humor, futuristic, or

atmospheric tales are all possible, as long as they contain a crime or the suggestion of one." Payment: 7 cents/word, on acceptance. Guidelines with SASE. Sample: \$3.

MARION ZIMMER BRADLEY'S FANTASY MAGAZINE, Box 249, Berkeley, CA 94701. Editor: Marion Zimmer Bradley. Current needs: well-plotted, action or adventure fantasy, 1,500-7,000 words, strongly prefers 3,000-4,000. **Only buys work longer than 4,000 words from established writers to be used for the cover story. No_dot_matrix Does not want more female bandits/thieves. Send SASE for guidelines before sending ms. Payment: 3-10 cents/word.

POCKET BOOKS will be doing another Star Trek anthology/contest for new writers: STAR TREK: STRANGE NEW WORLDS II. Grand Prize is \$1,000 plus 10 cents/word for publication in the anthology. Rules and guidelines are too long to go into here. See www.simonands.com/star Trek/features/strange.html or send SASE to Strange New Worlds II, Star Trek Department, Pocket Books, 1230 6th Ave., New York, NY 10020. ****Open_to_non-pro_writers_only.

REALMS OF FANTASY, P.O. Box 527, Rumson, NJ 07760. Editor: Shawna McCarthy. Full color and full-sized. Open to all types of fantasy, including dark fantasy up to 10,000 words (5,000-8,000 preferred). "What I like is the unusual. It doesn't have to be a new idea—god knows there are few enough of them—but I do prefer that it be a new look at a familiar idea or setting. That's why I'm not too fond of 'standard' fantasy, since much of it seems to be the same stock characters with different names setting off on slightly different quests. I like to see new settings, exotic mythologies, new looks at familiar ideas and settings." Please do not send self-addressed postcards with submissions. Payment: 5-8 cents/word. Return time: 2-3 weeks up to 4 months.

SCIENCE FICTION AGE, 11305 Sunset Hills Road, Reston, VA 20190. Editor: Scott Edelman. Length: up to 22,000 words. SF only. No fantasy. Payment: 10 cents/word, but "I am looking for the best." Full color cover and thick glossy paper. Available on newsstands. Return time: 1-2 weeks.

STARLIGHT 3, c/o Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Tor Books, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010. Write STARLIGHT on the envelope. Editor: Patrick Nielsen Hayden. Anthology. Send only one submission at a time, then wait for a response, before sending another. "I'm interested in all kinds of sf and fantasy, definitely including hard sf . . . open to novellas . . . can be very slow to respond." Length: no upper limit. Payment: 7 1/2 cents/word. Open_until_the_end_of_1999.

SUCH A PRETTY FACE: TALES OF POWER & ABUNDANCE, Attn. Such a Pretty Face, c/o Rump Parliament, P.O. Box 865137, Plano, TX 75086-5137. Editor: Ms. Lee Martindale. Anthology buying sf/f/d/f/h. "Size-positive stories that start with the premise that 'fat

is not a four-letter word, fat people in prominent, positive, and heroic roles, and well-crafted, non-stereotypical fat villains, not looking for stories about "miracle" or supernatural weight loss, deliberate weight gain, erotica, or fat-girl-loses-weight-and-gets-revenge stories, no promotion of diets or diet drugs (thinly-veiled or otherwise), of 'fat-gene' stories. Length: 5,000 words. Payment: 3-5 cents/word upon acceptance. Read guidelines before submitting and send cover letter with credits. Deadline: July 31, 1999.

***** MANY THANKS TO *****

Warren
KDW & Guido
Diana Carolyn Ice

***** SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION *****

A subscription to *Son of GPIC*, the official newsletter of the Oklahoma Science Fiction Writers, may be obtained by mailing a check or money order in the amount of \$13.00 (\$18 per household), prorated by quarter, to:

K.D. Wentworth, Treasurer
6915 New Haven
Tulsa, OK
(Checks should be made out to K.D. Wentworth)

Please note: An "X" on your mailing label indicates OSFW has no record of either 1999 dues or GPIC subscription renewal. This GPIC will be your last.

***** OSFW INFORMATION *****

The OSFW meets at members' homes the second Friday of every month to read, critique, and promote in general SF, Fantasy, and Horror writing. All willing to contribute and (after a couple of trial meetings) pay their dues are welcome. **There is no age limit but parents should understand that material with adult themes and language is read and discussed.** Membership dues are \$13.00 per year, adjusted by nearest quarter, which includes a subscription to GPIC. Checks should be made out to K.D. Wentworth, and may be sent to K.D. at the address above.

***** GPIC NEWS AND ARTICLES *****

GPIC solicits news and articles from OSFW members. We prefer they be on disk or sent via e-mail. Pseudonyms are OK. We accept files on either a 3-inch Mac or PC disk. We like RTF files but we can convert most Word and Word Perfect files; always include a separate ASCII file just in case.

Otherwise, arrange to send them by e-mail to Simon at: simon.mccaffery@wcom.com.

You retain copyright on material. If this is of special concern you might let us know who you really are along with your pseudonym. We reserve the right to edit (although we try not to).

***** NEXT GPIC DEADLINE *****

Pesky deadline for July issue: June 27.