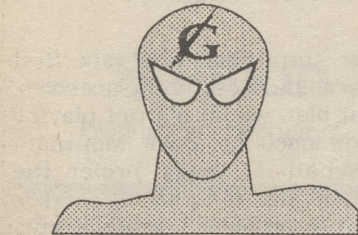


Ghostwriter



by Paul Rismiller

"And what is your nationality, Monsieur Rick?"

"I'm a drunkard."
- Humphrey Bogart
Casablanca

Amen to that, Bogie! I think I'll begin referring to myself as a Drunkard-American - may as well be part of a growing demographic!

Welcome to 1997, a year George Orwell couldn't envision in his most fevered dreams:

At last count, a nuclear arms smuggler, a convicted Lebanese embezzler, a Chinese arms merchant, and a cocaine dealer have attended fund-raising "coffees" at the White House. You'd think these people would have more sense than to hang out with low, shady characters such as those in the Clinton administration.

O.J. Redux - Oh Lord, will this never end? Whatever the outcome of the ongoing jury deliberations in the civil trial, after it's over, I pray the next time I see or hear those initials linked together are in reference to fruit juice.

There are only two points I can draw your attention to in the case of Paula Jones, beyond the blatant hypocrisy of the women's movement:

1) Much has been made of Ms. Jones' "trailer-park trash" background, but not many have stated the obvious - it is exactly this type of woman who is the most likely to be sexually harassed.

2) Oddly enough, it is also this slice of the female population who, almost to a woman, thought Anita Hill was lying through her teeth.

Television has adopted a barely intelligible and apparently quite useless ratings system at the urg-

Bubbagate and beyond; truth is stranger than Science Fiction

ing of parents who can't find, or don't know how to operate the off switch. How good can a system be that gives *Touched by an Angel* and *Married with Children* the same rating?

On the local scene, we're actually scraping up against the 20th century - at least on a cultural level - we have two free entertainment weeklies in the area. Pity the one based in Luzerne county is, to put it kindly, a waste of trees. "Tragically hip" is the phrase that springs to mind. As does "Ego-trip" (did you see the all-Sarah Starr edition a few weeks ago?). When the editor graces the front page, you've just about hit rock bottom.

Besides, the horoscope is completely incomprehensible!

And speaking of local journalism, someone should inform a high-profile columnist, who was sniveling about bookies and wife-beating Superbowl week, that his premise is flawed from the start. Not two weeks before, a wire-service feature on a statistical research firm mentioned in passing the supposed jump in domestic violence during the big game was complete bunk!

But what else can you expect from someone who's stock in trade is controversy for its own sake.

As far as politics in N.E. Pa. what can be said? The usual suspects are about as subtle as a knee to the groin, and as sharp as styrofoam, but there's no arguing they are spectacularly successful in a parasitical, virus-like fashion.

The more things change, the more they stay the same, at least around here.

And on that rather depressing note, let's flip to a far less serious, and far more fun subject, where change is what it's all about - Science Fiction!

The only way to avoid the hoopla surrounding the theatrical re-release (and re-cut) of *Star Wars* is to hole up in some forgotten air-raid shelter for a few months. All of a sudden, the reclusive creator of the saga, George Lucas, is unavoidable on the airwaves.

While I suppose it will be cool to take children who have never seen the original trilogy on the big screen: I'm more excited about the prospect of the long awaited "prequel" trilogy finally being started! But at the rate Lucas is moving at completing the proposed nine films, I'll be approaching social-security age by the time they're done.

Warheads won't have nearly so long to wait for "*Star Trek: First Contact*" to arrive on home video. If you missed it in the theater, you owe it to yourself to at least rent the video - even if you aren't a trekker, you'll enjoy this movie.

With luck, Jonathan Frakes (Commander Riker) will direct the next feature as well, because he did a bang up job on this one.

Another video I'm eagerly awaiting is *Mars Attacks!* Even with Jack Nicholson, Glenn Close, Sarah Jessica Parker, Michael J. Fox, Pierce Brosnan, Danny DeVito, Jim Brown, Tom Jones, Rod Steiger, Paul Winfield, and half a dozen other familiar faces, the wickedly funny, computer-generated Martians stole the show.

Mars Attacks! was a lot less serious (if that's possible) and far more fun than last summer's blockbuster, *Independence Day*.

Speaking of *ID4*, one of it's stars, Will Smith, is co-starring with Tommy Lee Jones in *Men in Black*, which, if the previews do it any justice, looks like it's going to be a real hoot.

Smith's co-star in *ID4*, Jeff Goldblum, is the only cast member to reprise his role in *Jurassic Park: The Lost World*, stomping its way towards a theater near you in the not too distant future.

While television is, as usual, stuffed to the test pattern with dreck, Sci-Fi provides an oasis in the wasteland - from *The X-Files*, to it's far darker stable-mate, *Milennium*, to lighter fare, like *3rd Rock from the Sun*, and the hilarious spoof, *Homeboys in Outer Space*.

My only regret is that I don't have the Sci-Fi Channel, if only to wait for the excellent and varied flavors of science fiction available today to eventually be showcased there for years to come.

Cub Scouts puff their way to head of the pack

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOEETTER
Post staff

DALLAS - Ahoy Mateys! Cub Scout Pack 281 held a model boat race on Jan. 31 in the Dallas Middle School cafeteria, with 68 scouts ranging from second to fifth grade showed up for some fun and friendly competition.

The troop was divided into three groups, the Bears, Wolves and Webelos. The Scouts created their own boats from a kit including a mere piece of wood, a stick and sail. You wouldn't have known their decorated vessels came from such meager beginnings.

The boats floated at one end of two drain pipes that were blocked off at each end and filled with water. Two contenders lined up at the parallel pipes. "Ready, set, go!" Then they were off. Huffing and puffing, they filled their boats' sails with air.

The races averaged about 20

seconds. Each scout raced at least twice for the excitement of competition and a shot at one of the 21 prizes, including beautiful golden trophies, plaques and ribbons.

The top three winners go on to the District Races against other troops in the NEPA council, which takes place in March at the West Side Mall. Those who placed in the top six were: Casey Zalenski, 1st place; David Dwinchick, 2nd place; Ronnie Shiner, 3rd place; Matt Buckman, 4th place; David Harding, 5th place; and Brian Goeringer, 6th place.

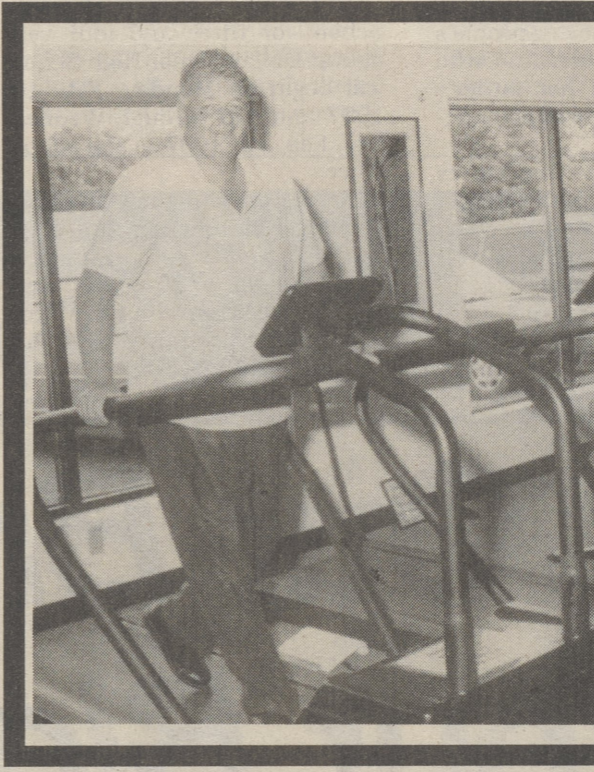
"It's fun because you do it yourself by blowing it down the track," explained Joe Bednash, 10.

Webelo den leader Sheryl Bednash had a great time watching the races. "It's fun to watch them get so excited," she said. "We try to stress good sportsmanship and that the focus is to have fun."



Ryan Gilroy, 8, with his Cub Scout craft.

"It's fun to watch them get so excited."
Sheryl Bednash
Den leader



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LETTERS

Game Commission invites scrutiny of deer tags

Editor:

In a letter to your paper on January 28, 1997, Mr. William Miller of Dallas alleges that the Game Commission has been publishing false information regarding the harvest of deer and asserts that if the agency has nothing to hide it should allow an independent group to examine the deer kill reports.

For as long as I can remember, the Game Commission has is-

sued a standing invitation to sportsmen's groups to go to Harrisburg and count the report cards turned in by hunters each year. We only ask that a reservation be made so personnel will be on hand to assist. This year the Game Commission intends to have a biologist, along with all the report cards turned in by hunters, at the Game Commission's exhibit booth at the Eastern Sports Show in Harrisburg. Sportsmen are urged

to bring along the back tag numbers of successful hunters, who reported their kills, to verify that our records are indeed correct. Falsifying reports is a crime. If you think we're lying - we invite you to check it out!

Jack Weaver
Information & Education
Supervisor
Northeast Region
PA Game Commission

scene of an accident near Lehman Saturday might have lost his life during the cold weekend weather was dispelled Monday when Mrs. Grant Ashburner of Lehman found the dog near her home. She called Hugh Hewitt, the dog's blind owner after noticing the dog come repeatedly to the scene of the Saturday accident. Hewitt identified and claimed him that same evening.

40 Years Ago - Feb. 8, 1957 LUMBER AND COAL CO. STANDS TO LOSE MONEY

Back Mountain Lumber & Coal Co. stands to lose between \$300-\$400 on a coal contract with Westmoreland schools. Atty. Robert Fleming said at the Monday evening school board meeting that there is no legal redress. The contract originally contained an escalator clause to provide for increase in cost. Granville Sowden of Back Mountain Lumber & Coal, struck out this clause and entered a firm bid for the year. Board members regretfully agreed that if they ignored the contract and paid a higher price for coal than agreed upon they would be individually liable to surcharge.

You could get - Sirlain steak, 69¢ lb.; whole hams 59¢ lb.; Vienna bread 17¢ loaf; cauliflower, 2-10 oz. pkgs. 49¢; apples, 4 lb. bag, 49¢.

30 Years Ago - Feb. 9, 1967 RECORD LOWS AT PIKES CREEK; 42 BELOW ZERO

Two times in recorded history it has been 42° below zero at Pikes Creek, once over a century ago and once in the early 30's when PWA workers spent the frigid day keeping their fires going and accomplishing nothing except keep-

ing from freezing to death. Pikes Creek hit 20° below according to Williams Grocery Store which also furnished the item about the 42° below zero reading.

Despite the weather with an incipient snowstorm getting up steam and glazing highways last Friday, the Open House, staged by Luzerne County Soil Survey Unit at the Dallas Post Office drew a large number of people from a considerable distance. Residents stomped in, agreed the weather was lousy, viewed their acreage through the stereoscope which showed everything in the round and compared notes on farm ponds.

20 Years Ago - Feb. 10, 1973 STELTZ RECEIVES INFO ON LAKE TWP. SHARING FUNDS

Secretary-Treasurer Judy Steltz reported that she received information regarding the proper placement of part of the township's revenue sharing funds. At Lake Township's supervisor's meeting Feb. 1, Steltz said she will have to place the funds into a special account which with the existing revenue will permit her to meet the township's monthly payroll of about \$2600.

Harveys Lake council men discussed rerating borough application for federal public works funding for two proposed borough projects, road construction and a new municipal building during their regular monthly meeting last Thursday. The borough was advised by federal officials that their municipal building project rated 85.08 on the scale of 100 points used by officials weighing applications for funds. The rating placed Harveys Lake 189th of 1108 applicants.

ONLY
YESTERDAY

60 Years Ago - Feb. 12, 1937 BOARD CONSIDERS SPECIAL CLASS FOR CHILDREN

A proposal to establish a special class to help children who are slow to learn, with the State paying 80% of the cost of the teachers, is being considered by Dallas Borough School Board. Wilkes-Barre and Kingston already have such classes which are devoted especially to children who cannot be given proper personal attention when they are forced to study with brighter children.

As a first step in raising money to equip a local playground next summer, the PTA of Dallas Borough will sponsor a card party at the borough high school on Feb. 18. Refreshments will be served and prizes will be awarded at each table.

50 Years Ago - Feb. 14, 1947 LONG OPENS NEW FARM EQUIPMENT STORE

Charles H. Long, one of the most alert young men farm equipment dealers in the area will open his new building at Sweet Valley on Feb. 21. The new 64 x 80 building has an attractive Colonial exterior and is located on a high spot of ground where it can be seen from four main highways. Fear that Toby, German Boxer seeing eye dog, who ran from the

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