

Member News

Best wishes go out to Kim Yale, who is currently undergoing chemotherapy for breast cancer. Drop a line to let Kim and John know you're thinking about them; they report that the good wishes really do help.

Donna Barr

Donna writes: *The Desert Peach* has been chosen by the New York Public Library to be part of their 1995 Spring Centennial Exhibit. And Roberta Gregory and I have been asked by the Washington Association for the Book to conduct a workshop, "What IS a Graphic Novel Anyway" in conjunction with the Comic Strip/Caricature Centennial. Here are some of the topics we will touch on: (1) Alternative—to WHAT? (2) Superheroes—Mainstream, or Adolescent Limited Specialty Market? (3) "Sequential Art"? "Graphic Novel"? Why all the gobbledygook? If it's bound and has pages, it's a BOOK. (4) How to File an Illustrated Book in the Library.

Colleen Doran

Colleen writes: This summer I attended a regional festival (in Virginia) called Bay Days. Over 100,000 people showed. There was a juried art show, and I was able to get in based on my non-genre paintings. But boy, were the judges surprised when I stocked my booth with comic books, posters, and other merchandise! I allied myself with Atomic Comics, managed by Shelly Destrop, and had her pull everything I had ever done from stock. The book attracted a lot of attention, as you can imagine, especially since all the other artists were selling paintings of ducks. We gave away several hundred Friends of Lulu fliers.

Interestingly enough, equal numbers of men and women, boys and girls stopped by the booth. My most popular items were copies of prints I had painted for Lynn Johnston's *For Better or Worse* series and *A Distant Soil* #2, since its back cover was a copy of *Jessica*, an original painting I had on display in the show. This type of work is often overshadowed at conventions, but in the mainstream, it rules! In general, comics sold like mad. The extremely low overhead made it easy to make a profit and we were able to get comics to people who have never bought them before!

More creators and comic shops should

consider trying local and regional festivals as outlets for attracting new readers. We see the same people over and over again at comic-cons, the table rental prices are outrageous, and the time and expense involved makes making a profit nearly impossible.

I am currently developing a comic book for young girls called *Daughters of the Wind*™ that I expect to have out this summer. Even with all the books I have done, I am sad to say I have never created anything for children. Often young girls come up to my booth looking for a comic to buy, and I just don't think *A Distant Soil* is appropriate for small children. I plan to start with a four-issue miniseries late this summer, published under my imprint, Aria Press.

Anina Bennett

She writes, he draws: Wife-and-husband Lulu members Anina Bennett and Paul Guinan collaborate on *Heartbreakers*, a new science-fiction action miniseries from Dark Horse. The series will also feature paper dolls by FoL members Trina Robbins and Barb Rausch, plus cover art, pinups, and more from Mike Allred, Dan Brereton, Paul Chadwick, Evan Dorkin, Sarah Dyer, Matt Haley, Terry LaBan, Ron Randall, Alex Ross, Jill Thompson, and Matt Wagner. Anina and Paul also publish a sporadic newsletter called *Big Red Hair*, and have set up a *Heartbreakers* Interactive database at the Dark Horse web site (<http://www.dhorse.com/>)



Anina and Paul's *Heartbreakers*

Speaking of the Web, Debbie David's cyber-swashbuckling comic "The Adventures of the Black Blade" can now be found on the Internet at <http://ourworld.com/serve.com/homepages/ODD>. There's one version with illos and a separate text version for Lynx. MEMBERS: PUT YOUR NEWS HERE! Let us know what you're up to.

The Dave Letter

By now you've probably seen or heard about Dave Sim's "Dear Friends of Lulu" letter in *Cerebus* 203 (February 1996). If you haven't, he basically makes some incorrect assumptions about FoL (it's made up of solely of women professionals, it's a "feminist" organization) and then goes on to ask FoL to become involved in supporting the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, to show that we're not for censorship.

Dave sent me a copy of the letter in January, and I wrote a response, which the other members of the FoL Board helped revise. This response, rather than addressing Dave's misconceptions about FoL point by point, simply describes FoL's membership policies, goals, and activities and closes by saying that we think comics needs both the CBLDF and FoL, each with its separate but complementary goals, if the medium is to survive.

Dave has informed us that our reply will not be publishing until the May issue of *Cerebus*. He did give us the option of dropping our reply "if some sort of compromise could be achieved." He then outlined a plan for "women professionals" in FoL to "generate some kind of public document" to circulate wherever a First Amendment prosecution is taking place. In exchange for "investigating the possibility" that some members of FoL undertake this project, Dave offered FoL four pages in the back of *Cerebus* "as part of any membership drive you might have going." We plan no response to that offer.

Certainly it would behoove those FoL members (female or male) who are particularly concerned about comic shop busts such as the egregious one in Oklahoma City to take some kind of action to help fight censorship and protect our First Amendment rights. If you'd like to help such cases, you should contact Susan Alston, Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, 206 Prospect St., Northampton, MA 01060, 413-582-0258.

—Jackie Estrada

Illustrators and Cartoonists Wanted. Oso Publishing is currently developing a pool of illustrators and cartoonists with whom to establish ongoing relationships as they prepare to launch a Spanish language children's magazine. You can contact Susan Holdridge at Oso Publishing, 605 Chenery Street, Suite B, San Francisco, CA 94131.