

Spring started today: it is snowing

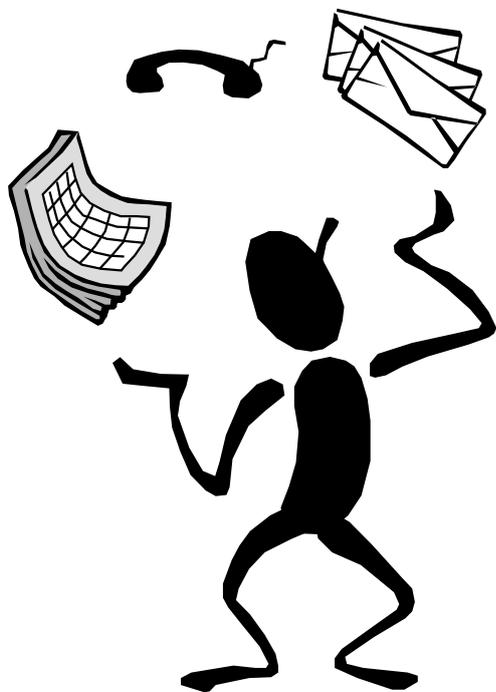
This is a personal 'new age'zine by Martijn. In case you would like to reach me outside of these pages, you can find me via snailmail in the xxx, The Netherlands and via Internet at yy.

Spring has joined us

Yes, today it March 21st. Spring started. It really was a beautiful day. But beautiful in a different way. It was snowing. All day. Snowflakes came out of the sky. The earth got white. The only thing is that it is a bit out of line. It doesn't snow during springtime.

It is a bit like my life nowadays. There are so many nice things, but in some way it doesn't all fit together yet.

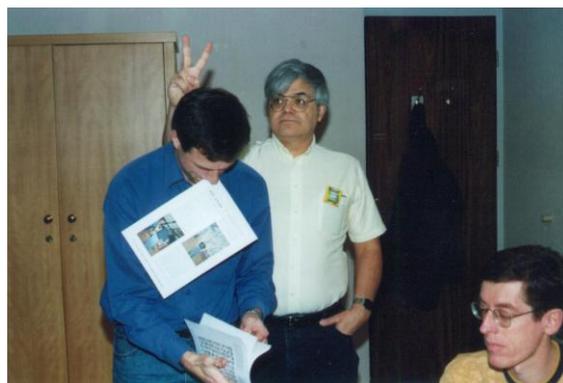
Maybe I'll explain a bit next time, but I can't get the picture clear at this moment. It looks a bit like this at the moment:



Strangely enough I also used this picture for a presentation last week at work. It

showed all the things my department has to do the coming year. If I find the time I want to tell you a bit more of the fun you can have because some European countries are changing their currency.

Con Treaty look back



My favourite picture of the last convention (courtesy of Irene). While I'm trying to work (my Dapper contribution is hanging out of my mouth), Dwight is showing the world how relative everything is (and don't mind the OE concentrated doing something).

I have a recollection of a huge room with a separate living room and bedroom. The video room was next door but we didn't hear them.

Every year they have this SF-quiz. I think that Jaap and I have been the only participants over the last five years. This had turned into a yearly show where the organising duo asks for participants and Jaap and I at the end agree to do them a favour. But Jaap was guest of honour last year and had to participate in something else. So I asked others to join

me in the quiz. A guy called Andrew was persuaded by me to come along. I really got 'slaughtered'. All the others present joined in as a third party (and were called 'the house'). In the end, Andrew had won, the house came in second and I came in last. I talked to Andrew afterwards and he told me he had even had appeared on British television in quizzes with his SF-knowledge.

Berlin calling

I went to Berlin with Linda a few weeks ago. It was my brother's 40th birthday and I wanted to be there. Although he already lives in Berlin for about 6 years now, I had never been there. It wasn't possible in my marriage.

The beauty of the city amazed me. Apart from being one big building site (yes, it is true, I've seen it with my own eyes), there were a lot of beautiful historical sites. I really was amazed as I thought that Berlin had been one flat city after the last world war. I took one complete afternoon just to walk over 'Unter den Linden', a large road in the centre of the city. It used to be East Berlin and is now being 'rebuild'. Lots of the old buildings have survived or have been rebuild.

The 'Branderburger Tor' was a disappointment. It was being redecorated or something. But the 'or something' wasn't clear because there was a large sheet covering the complete thing. The sheet had a huge picture of the 'Branderburger Tor' printed on it. At first, from the distance I was standing, it seemed that the colour of the 'Tor' was wrong. When I came near, I saw it was because it was a picture and because there was a sentence on the sheet saying that Deutsche Telekom was funding it (whatever that 'it' may have been). Another thing that amazed me was that there were so many bullet holes in the buildings in what used to be East Berlin. I could feel the war having been there.

Checkpoint Charlie is also still available. It is also easy to find. Just look for the circle of tourist making pictures of a

small white cabin. The museum nearby made an impression on me. All those people trying to escape. So close and so far. I regret never having been to the old Berlin. I would have loved to be able to tell the (emotional) difference between then and now.

I found the DVD from Galaxy Quest in a shop and thought I would be able to buy it in Holland. But it isn't out here yet. I hate that kind of mistakes. When I was in London last October, I saw the Clint Eastwood/Sergio Leone DVD/movie 'A fistful of dollars'. I did buy the other two of the trilogy in Holland and was sure I would be able to buy that third one in Holland to. Up to now it is not for sale in Holland

I will go back to Berlin, not only for my brother but also to see the city.

Horribles of life

A few weeks ago Frans, one of the colleagues in my department, died. I used to talk to him very regularly, we were about the same age and shared a thing or two in music and buying DVD's. On Friday afternoon I lent him two DVD's. One with the directors cut of 'The Abyss' and one with a concert from the Moody Blues. We talked about the members of the Moody Blues and the concert I had been to in 1993. On Monday morning his team manager called me and told me Frans had suffered a heart attack on Sunday afternoon and had died. I was working at home but drove to work at once. The team manager had arranged a meeting for all the colleagues in the department. I had to tell them the bad news and I cried. A few days later I went to the funeral and held a speech on behalf of his colleagues. In the beginning I hardly could read my own lines. Afterwards someone told me I had spoke very softly. So many emotions.

On the way out of the cemetery, the police held a speed control. I don't think they should do that on this particular road. It didn't seem appropriate.

The team manager herself is a young woman of thirty-one. She was completely 'of the world' for a few weeks.

KID STUFF

My favourite corner of the contrib. But today, I'm writing it as the last part of my contribution. This means I will not get as much on paper as I wanted to.

They got their second school report last week. Both reports were pretty good. I am a very proud father. In the Dutch system you get grades from one to ten. The one is very bad, the ten is excellent. In the school (or class) of the kids, they only got grades from four to eight. As I can remember from other catholic primary schools, they often say that the 9 is for the teacher and the 10 for God. I do hope this will be different in other classes in their school. Otherwise they will be deprived of getting any outstanding result. And if kids are good in something, they should be rewarded for that. A. got, I think to remember, about ten times an eight, three times a seven and four times a six. R. even got better, he got two sixes (for music and religion), two or three sevens (handicrafts and technical reading) and the rest eight's.

R. took part in the first championship of his judo school. He had just changed judo schools and was new in this one. It was one of the first things I went to with them after the divorce. It was magnificent. It was fun being out with them and my stomach worked overtime when R. was fighting. He lost only one match in the series. This other boy was really fighting. When he attacked (can't use another word), he stamped his foot on the ground and moved forward. This boy made R. (and two other boys in the series) cry. And R. doesn't cry, he's got a very high pain level. But the boy had grabbed him around his neck and squeezed very hard. This can be done in a way that you can throw someone or

this can be done in a painful way so someone will lie down because of the pain. In this case, it was the painful way but due to an uncontrolled way of fighting. My heart broke. But they met again in the finals. I really was afraid of what might happen as R. was a bit afraid of the kid. But he managed to stay out of any painful situation. And because of the way the other kid was fighting, the public was on his hand. I heard parents I don't know shouting his name. But, as you might have guessed from the picture below, he won (see the look of the boy in second place, he is not happy). And because he was a white belt and all he had won from other higher belts, the judo teacher gave him the yellow belt on the spot as a reward. This even made the local newspaper (yes I'm proud).



And how smart can they get.

Me: 'Are you going to watch Digimon' (and I pronounced it on a Dutch way)?

R.: 'Daddy, you do write Digimon, but you should pronounce it as Digimon (and he pronounced it in the English way)'

Books

So less time, so many books to read. Please help me. I've got this growing collection of books and I do read about 6 books per year nowadays. In this pace I will never finish all the books I already have and want to read in the rest of my life.

I read the first part of 'The chosen' by Ricardo Pinto. Since the convention I started emailing with him. I just didn't give him any comment on the book. In English there will be three books, in Dutch there will be six. The publisher thought the books were too massive. After one book there is not so much to tell. Just the opening in about 300 pages. Introducing all characters. The main character is a young boy who accompanies his father out of exile. His father is summoned to play his part in deciding who can be emperor next. The caste system, which has an important role, is introduced. Before I read the book, we had a little discussion about punishment. He suggested frying someone for a small offence and I told him I wouldn't like to know what he would do to his enemies. He answered that I should read his book. And he was right. If you mind people getting killed aimlessly (including the odd dead body or so), you shouldn't read it. I assume that a lot are killed because the story has to be built, but I do hope there is a meaning for it.

I started to read books about communications management, cats, Leonardo da Vinci, I just haven't finished them. So many other things to do.

One-liner

Last year, one of the many elections the Belgian Flemish people had, also attracted attention in Holland because we won. It was the championship of the best one-liner. The winner was Hans Wiegel, a famous Dutch liberal politician.

Once, during an election meeting in 1976, members of the Communist Unity Party tried to hinder him while he was speaking. 'Asshole', one of the quarrelsome people shouted. Hans Wiegel replied very keen: 'Nice of you to introduce yourself! My name is Hans Wiegel'. Every time I read it, I still laugh, and I wish I had answers like that.

MAILCOMS

All

Cheer up, doesn't the world look bright when it is all white outside (it has a nice 'i' sound although I don't know if the sentence is correct English). Enjoy your life and what it can give to you. Enjoy the view out of your window because it is different and new every time.

OE

Yeah, I know, I'm a nasty boy. I promised you two pages and I did not keep my promise. I've filled five pages up to now and I will get the sixth also. I cannot fail those at the ConTreaty dinner who convinced me I should stay on writing for Dapper, even in this period when I don't seem to have the time.

Peter

You did read a lot. The last weeks of the last millennium. I'm really jealous. You can read in my very small part about books that I get frustrated because of the 'not reading'.

When my ex-wife left, she took everything that belonged to the children. Regrettably this is allowed because the children have their main residence with her. I had to buy new things (like beds, toys etc.) but up to now I didn't buy so much that I could fill both old rooms. Nowadays they tend to play more in the living room with me instead of upstairs. Their old extra (playing) room became available for other things. So I will make it into a combined working/guest/book room. I bought four bookcases, 3.60 meter wide. I put in them the books that

were in boxes of behind other books. And to my astonishment, the bookcases were completely full afterwards. I think I can put one extra book in between. I think I still have to read some.

I also should be reading more of Chris's books. I've read them all in Dutch years ago, but he's written so many since then.

Irene

Don't complain about your short con report. Have you seen mine? Even with your picture in it, it is shorter.

You read a book in Spanish. Marvellous. Another language you have conquered. I once read one page of a Spanish book at a friend's house. He took a Spanish course and I was amazed by the fact that is the context was easy to follow. Although I didn't understand each word, I understood what was meant. The language obvious has some similarity to French. On the other hand, I never understand Spanish speaking persons.

RE: Trouble with tribbles. Did you see the DS9 episode 'trail and tribbleations'? I saw a rerun last week. They had mixed in old scenes from the original episode and it looked about the same quality. What a good computer can do nowadays. I did like the story although I did not like the DS9 crew taking credit for some of the things that Kirk did (or rather, taking out some of the danger that might have occurred for Kirk).

RE: 'Die Frauen der Nazis'. I saw the book in Berlin (and the next one from the same author, there were a few women left). I was intrigued by it and read a little in the shop. I wanted to buy both but I stopped myself after I realised I did have some more books to read. So many interesting stories that lie behind what we know.

RE: your comment to Rick. I also prefer taking the car. When I drive to my work in the morning (around 08:00), it will take me an hour. Probably it will also take me an hour by train. But I enjoy the freedom the car gives me so I will take the car. These last month's I start working at home and go to work after

09:00. It will save me about 20 minutes of driving time.

RE: you comment to me. You needn't be so nosy, my (new) girlfriend was at the convention. So your question about me bringing her next time.....I think it has already been filled in by me. Wasn't it that obvious who she was? The fact is that she is also a fan, I met her at the sf-pub in The Hague. She had her own friends at the convention and filled her own time (except for the time we were together).

After reading your comment to me, I started thinking if my ex was controlling me. She was, but not in a direct way. She believed that what she did and said was the best for the children (and sometimes for her) and this always meant that I should do things and also couldn't do other things. I think she will not recognise it when you ask her if she controlled anything in my life.

Up to now everything with the kids works out fine. The love being with me. I try to make them feel that they also live with me and not only with their mother. They shouldn't feel as if they are on holiday with me. They should be able to do what they want in a way they want it themselves. As if they are at home (and they are).

My evaluation went well. It was a little higher than last year (4.7 out of a possible 5 points, last year was 4.6). But I do not get a grip on the fact that I do want to move on. I started this job to get in. I also made clear that what I would like to do after I started the job. My boss hasn't coached me over the last two years, he just had me run my department so he had his hands free to see to those business or colleagues that needed more attention. He agreed he had done to little about him coaching me and we made an appointment about how to get it working. It also was his last day at work, he didn't come back up to now. He calls it an energy loss. He just worked too hard over the last years. He's recovering slowly and will start next month. Just for an hour per day to see how it goes. And yes, there is a story about the guy who is now filling in as

interim manager. But that will take me to much time. It just means that I'm (but not active) looking for a new job. I do like the department I'm working, I do like most of the people so I'm in no hurry.

Oh, my, yeah, I don't mind you writing me long mailcoms. It gives me the feeling that I'm being read and followed (and cared about) along my steps in life.

Elise

You also didn't win the big prize during new years night. Me neither. Their must have been so many☺. I did win 30 guilders. But as the lottery tickets cost me 50 guilders, it felt like I lost.

You make me curious what you have to tell us. Playing with us when saying: 'And maybe I have some other news'.

Anette

Reading your contribution made me realise how futile my problems are. You sound cheerful enough, I do hope you can keep up those feelings.

Any pictures available from the shaving session?

Can you get enough DVD's for your laptop? Are they a bit affordable in Canada? I'm not sure how much the Canadian dollar is compared to the guild, but in US dollars I pay between 20 and 30.

Malgorzata

Last time you told us you wanted to read about the normal life of us. I think we have given you a lot of that. I feel like I have lived with you for years. Or better, I've lived moments of your life you found to be interesting. Interesting enough to share with other.

I recognise the feeling that other people do not appreciate your hard work. I also think that a job like you did should be supported by Polish fans, not killed.

You write perfect English as far as I can see. I on the other hand, do make mistakes. I just write what I think. Regrettably, except for that standard dictionary, I do not have any help. Although I try to use the correct expression, I sometimes make mistakes. A fine example was in a mail to Ricardo Pinto. Instead of writing about his height I wrote about his length.... (yes, I'm ashamed).

Monika

I hope the fact that this was the first con we didn't 'fight' contributed a bit to your opinion that this was a good con. On the other hand, we spoke less then last years and that also might have contributed.

I liked your report on Harry's books. Especially on the 'relating' part. I do too. I should read them some day. Linda's got them all so they are available. I even don't have to buy them.

So very good to hear that surgery went well.

I agree with you on 'The chosen'. It is very cruel and I do wonder where it will take the story. As it is so present in the story, it must be more then just part of the surrounding (I hope so). I wrote a bit about it in my book report. But I will also ask him, I'm a bit curious about that.

Jan

You wrote a con-report without mentioning that you almost only did the newsletter. But I saw you being a visible part of ConTreaty a lot of times.

You mentioned the GoH speech of Ricardo Pinto. Of course you know he barely made it. He was up with us, having free drinks until about five or six in the morning. As far as I can remember somebody had to get him out of his bed because he had his GoH speech in ten minutes. But when he started speaking, you could hardly notice he had a hangover from last night. As you said, it was his first convention and he was amazed by the amount of freebies he could get.

Annemarie

Welcome. I think there is no reason why you should ask the question whether you can stay in Dapper. Of course you can. Feel free to write what you like as you like it. And as far as I know you, there is a lot you can tell about SF, fandom and life in general.

Dwight

Two years ago you gave me some Yoko Tsuno comics. I enjoyed reading them. Yes, I know they were meant for the kids, but they still are to young. To my surprise, Linda's got all of the Yoko comics. So I've read them all by now. Except for the logical flaws in them, they were fun to read. Linda now is interested in getting the Yoko's I have as they probably were first prints and she has later prints.

As father of a girl that is seven years old (and has been five), I can assure you that they like dolls. Her favourites are different Barbie dolls. The cheapest are about 4 US\$, so we or she can buy a few. I did had to buy her a few new ones after my ex had left with all the toys. When we went out to buy new toys on the first Saturday, she choose to buy Barbies.

After reading your disappointment about Analog 4 I ran to my bookcases and looked if this book or the stories you mentioned have been translated. But regrettably I couldn't find them. Regrettably because I was curious if I shared you opinion about them.

After further reading: what did John Campbell do to you. You sound a bit cynical. Maybe you should give him some more credit because he was one of the few that made possible we even read SF in these days. On the other hand, if he was the reason you went to read more

comics, you also should be thankful to him for that 😊.

Chris

How are the kids. Enjoyable as ever?

I'm curious how that works while you're writing. Do you get the chance without them asking for your attention. For me it doesn't work, but that may be because there is no woman in the house to keep them away.

Now I know you're also reading this, I will try to comment on your earlier contributions. You told us some historical tales (early computer stories already are historical). They brought memories back to me that I might want to share with my fellow Dapperites.

Rick

I don't believe you will be on grace, I believe you will write something for this issue. It might be a one-liner, but you will answer Jan. I do hope to be able to give you more comments next time.

Engel

How's the kid? Asking for Digimon and Dragonball Z already?

And, as always, I will leave you with the

Quote of the day:

There are more sites on the web that will help you find content then there are sites with content.