

# SPECIAL SPACE ISSUE!

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# Lite

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to residents of  
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Columbia, Glen Burnie,  
Laurel, Towson, and  
the entire Baltimore  
metropolitan area.

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1999

## Baltimore's Literary Newspaper



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### TOP STORY

## Under the Literary Arts Tent: Artscape 1999

The sun smiled on *Artscape 2000 minus 1* but not too harshly. The weekend before and the weekend after were from some hot, glaring, steamy Southern novel but *Artscape* had the weather of lucid, all-inclusive, epic prose. Telephone book weather almost. The crowds, black, white, and all shades in-between, flowed like a river thru Mt. Royal and environs. Humanity in all its beauty, in all its homeliness, brushed by the literary arts tent where the merchant, poet and observer, sometimes all within one human body, looked into and through the crowd, searching for a

corresponding sympathetic soul, who would buy, or at least listen to the book of one's heart, or of one's press. Some of the books were purchased; perhaps read later in the quiet of a study or in bed, a pillow propped up against the headboard, the yawn of a long day stifled; perhaps some of those books will be taken to heart and given an honored place there. The gauntlet of book merchants offered more than an assault upon one's wallet, more than purple prose and poetry with the essence of ambiguity distilled in syllables so correctly aligned that the most fastidious of

freshman composition teachers would fawn and coo.

Who were the merchants in the Literary Arts Tent that caused a bottleneck in the flow of the crowd? Though not as many as in years past, they were a formidable presence. The Maryland Poetry Review, Inspire, the Baltimore Writers Alliance, Inner Voices, WordHouse, the Maryland Writers' Association, Fodderwing, David Johnathon Sawyer (author of *My Great-Grandfather was Stonewall Jackson*,) and the Maryland

*Cont. on p. 8*

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# Literary August/September

A Bi-Monthly Potpourri of Literary Events

(Watch for more September events in *Lite's* September 1999 Supplement)

## Regular Reading Series

Monday, August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

**11:00 a.m.** Barnes & Noble-Towson Circle. Betty Walter leads a weekly meeting in writing memoir essays. Designed for those 50 and over.

Tuesday, August 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

**9:00 p.m.** Open Reading at Funk's Democratic Coffee Spot, 1818 Eastern Ave., Fells Point. For more info, call (410) 276-FUNK.

Wednesday, August 4, 18

**8:00-10:30 p.m.** "Open Mic Poetry and Music," sponsored by the Baltimore Alliance for Justice in the Americas. Bring poetry and/or an instrument. Sign up starts at 7 p.m. Adrian's Bookstore, 714 S. Broadway. For more info, call (410) 732-1048.

Thursday, August 5, 12, 19, 26

**8:00 p.m.-close.** Jazz session and open mic poetry, Xando Coffee and Bar, 3003 N. Charles St., Charles Village. For more info, call (410) 889-7076.

**8:30 p.m.** "Tell the World," open mic poetry and spoken word reading at the One World Cafe, 904 S. Charles St., Federal Hill. Hosted by Tom Swiss. For more info, email [tms@infamous.net](mailto:tms@infamous.net) or call (410) 455-5325.

Tuesday, August 10 & 17

**7:00 p.m.** Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. Writer's Group. Bring 15 copies of your work to distribute for discussion & critique.

## Literary August

Sunday, August 1

**5:00 p.m.** Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. The Irish Book Group discusses *The Committee* by Sean McPhilemy.

**7:00 p.m.** Dana Bloomfield of Curio Coast Productions does "Poetic Justice" at the Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Baltimore, 241 W. Chase St. Admission \$10. 50% of proceeds benefit GLCCB. For more info, call GLCCB at (410) 837-5445 or Curio Coast Productions at (410) 343-3478, box 5.

Monday, August 2

**7:00 p.m.** Borders-Towson. "Meter's Running" poetry series presents "Open Mic Night." Read from your original work for up to 10 minutes. Registration required at the first floor information desk. First-come, first-served event.

Tuesday, August 3

**7:30 p.m.** Dana Bloomfield and Curio Coast Productions host "Puddle Logic" at the Authors Café, York, PA. \$3+ donation requested. Includes "open stage." For more info, call (410) 343-3478, box 5.

Wednesday, August 4

**7:00 p.m.** Barnes & Noble-Towson Circle. Monday, August 9

Vaguely Jewish Book Club. *For the Relief of Unbearable Urges* by Nathan Englander.

Thursday, August 5

**7:00 p.m.** Historical Old Salem Church, 700 block of Ingleside Ave., Catonsville, hosts its third annual Poetry Night. Readers include 13-year-old Katie Daniels, who wrote the poem "The Memories of the Soldiers in the Viet Nam War" and read it at the Memorial Day observance in Washington, D.C., members of the poetry group "Quatrain": Danuta Kosk-Kosicka, Kathleen Corcoran, Liliane Roy Anders and Norma Chapman, and local poets Matt Hohner and Bradley Paul. Free. For more info, call (410) 744-7844.

Friday, August 6

**7:30 p.m.** Barnes & Noble-Annapolis. "Poet's Night Out/Annapolis Lites," hosted by The Lite Circle. Reading and Discussion Group. Facilitated by Sam Beard.

Saturday, August 7

**12:00 noon.** Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch, Poe Room. Poetry Discussion Group meets. This month's subject is the poetry of William Shakespeare.

Sunday, August 8

**11:00 a.m.** Bibelot-Woodholme. For children. Gina Golden reads from her collection of poems for young children titled *Little Rhymes for Growing Minds*.

**2:00 p.m.** Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. If you would like to share poems that you have written, or even if you are just interested in listening, the Wine Glass Poets welcome you to join them.

**6:30 p.m.** Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. The Book Addicts discuss *From the Mixed-up files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* by E.L. Konigsburg.

**7:30 p.m.** Barnes & Noble Towson Circle. Barbara Diehl of the Baltimore Writers' Alliance leads the Monthly Writers Workout.

Tuesday, August 10

**6:30 p.m.** Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch, Poe Room. The Book Discussion Group meets to discuss *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* by Amos Tutuola.

**7:00 p.m.** Bibelot Timonium. For children. Kevin O'Malley, author & illustrator of favorites *Carl Caught a Flying Fish* and *Velcome*, shares his newest book, *My Lucky Hat*.

**7:30 p.m.** Bibelot-Woodholme. Marcia Talley discusses and signs her first novel, *Sing it to Her Bones*, a suspense-thriller with scenes of Annapolis and the Chesapeake Bay used as a backdrop.

Goucher College, Merrick Lecture Hall. Presented w/Barnes & Noble. Terry Tempest Williams, author of *Coyote's Canyon* and *Pieces of White Shell: A Journey to Navajoland* will discuss her nature writings. A Mid-Atlantic Creative Nonfiction Summer Writers' Conference Event. Free. For more info, call (410) 337-6085.

Wednesday, August 11

**6:30 p.m.** Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch, Poe Room. Connie Briscoe reads from and signs her book *A Long Way From Home*.

*Continued on p. 3*

## The Big Literary "Spot" Lites

Barnes & Noble-Annapolis, 5216 Solomon's Island Rd., Annapolis Harbour Shopping Center. Phone: (410) 573-1115.

Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City, 4300 Montgomery Rd., Long Gate Shopping Center. Phone: (410) 203-7006.

Barnes & Noble-Towson Circle, 1 East Joppa Rd. Phone: (410) 296-7021.

Bibelot-Canton, 2400 Boston St. Phone: (410) 276-9700.

Bibelot-Timonium Crossing, 2080 York Rd. Phone: (410) 308-1888.

Bibelot-Woodholme, 1819 Reisterstown Rd., Pikesville. Phone: (410) 653-6933.

Borders-Columbia, 9051 Snowden Square Dr. Phone: (410) 290-0062.

Borders-Towson, 415 York Rd. Phone: (410) 296-0791.

Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central branch, 400 Cathedral St., Baltimore. Phone: (410) 396-5494.

WordHouse Salon at Minas, 733-35 S. Ann St., Fells Point. Phone: (410) 732-4258.

Calendar, cont. from p. 2

**7:30 p.m.** Goucher College, Merrick Lecture Hall. Presented w/Barnes & Noble. Poet and essayist Diane Ackerman will talk about her works including *A Natural History of Love* and her new book, *Deep Play*. A Mid-Atlantic Creative Nonfiction Summer Writers' Conference Event. Free. For more info, call (410) 337-6085.

Maryland Writers' Association general meeting. Special guest: *Baltimore Sun* columnist Susan Reimer, author of *Motherhood is a Contact Sport*. Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, New Annapolitan Room (306), Annapolis. For directions/info, call (410) 319-9487.

Thursday, August 12

**7:30 p.m.** Bibelot-Timonium Crossing. Stephen Coonts discusses and signs his newest military thriller, *Cuba*.

Goucher College, Merrick Lecture Hall. Presented w/Barnes & Noble. Tobias Wolf will speak about his books, including *This Boy's Life: A Memoir*, and *In Pharaoh's Army: Memories of the Lost War*. A Mid-Atlantic Creative Nonfiction Summer Writers' Conference Event. Free. For more info, call (410) 337-6085.

Friday, August 13

**7:30 p.m.** Goucher College, Merrick Lecture Hall. Presented w/Barnes & Noble. Alex Kotlowitz, the author of *There Are No Children Here* and *The Other Side of the River* will speak about his writings. A Mid-Atlantic Creative Nonfiction Summer Writers' Conference Event. Free. For more info, call (410) 337-6085.

Fells Point Creative Alliance Event. Performance Art—ChainReaction. Hosted by Cindy Rehm. The Lodge, 244 S. Highland Ave. Tickets are \$4 public, \$3 members. Tasty \$7 dinner served at 7:30 p.m. For more info, call (410) 276-1651.

Sunday, August 15

**2:00 p.m.** BSFS (Baltimore Science Fiction Society) Book Discussion Group, BSFS Clubhouse, Highlandtown, near intersection of Clinton St. & Highland Ave. (double-wide building with a formstone face and a sign in the window that says "Baltimore Science Fiction Society.") For more info, call (410) JOE-BSFS or visit: [www.bsfs.org](http://www.bsfs.org).

**4:00 p.m.** Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. The Philosophical Book Group discusses *Great Dialogues of Plato* translated by W.H.D. Rouse.

Monday, August 16

**7:00 p.m.** Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. Creative Workshop for Writers. If you are having trouble getting started, finding an ending, or have writer's block in between, check out this new group.

Friday, August 20

**8:00 p.m.** "Lite Verse" at Bibelot-Timonium Crossing. Local author and teacher Vigen Guroian will read from his book. *Inheriting Paradise: Meditations on Gardening*. Light refreshments served. Open reading follows. Hosted by Dave Kriebel.

Saturday, August 21

**9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.** Maryland Romance Writers present a one-day writing workshop at Maryvale Prep School located on Falls Rd. in the Brooklandville area of Baltimore County. For more info, email Donna at [dlbolk@gte.net](mailto:dlbolk@gte.net).

**1:00-3:00 p.m.** The Lite Circle hosts "Poetry in the Shade," open reading/discussion series held the third Saturday of each month at Something Special Coffee House, 304 Main St., Laurel. All are invited to read or just listen. For more info, call (410) 889-1574 or (410) 719-7792.

Sunday, August 22

**1:30 p.m.** The Harford Poetry Society sponsors a reading by Rosemary Klein and other poets from the *Maryland Poetry Review* at Liriodendron, 502 W. Gordon St., Bel Air. For more info, call (410) 877-1625.

Monday, August 23

**7:30 p.m.** Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. Sci-Fi Book Group. *Einstein's Bridge* by John Cramer is discussed.

Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. Literary Readings. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston is discussed.

Tuesday, August 24

**7:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Timonium Crossing. Ruby Fruit Book Discussion Group will examine *Cave Dweller* by Dorothy Alison.

**7:30 p.m.** Bibelot-Woodholme. Glenn Frankel discusses and signs his novel *Rivonia's Children*, which takes place in South Africa.

Barnes & Noble-Towson Circle. Architectural historian Christopher Weeks discusses his new book *Perfectly Delightful: The Life and Gardens of Harvey Ladew*. He will also present a slide show.

Wednesday, August 25

**7:00 p.m.** Barnes & Noble-Towson Circle. Bare Print Open Mic Circle. Share your fiction and poetry in an informal setting. Registration begins at 6:45 p.m.

Thursday, August 26

**7:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Canton. *The Maryland Poetry Review* hosts its monthly reading series. Poets Virginia Crawford, Steven C. Cunningham, and Jennifer Neeley read. Open reading follows.

**7 Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. I Know This Much is True** by Wally Lamb is discussed in the "A Novel Idea" book group.

Friday, August 27

**7:00 p.m.** Barnes & Noble Ellicott City. Open Mic Poetry.

Saturday, August 28

**10:15 a.m.** The Book Discussion Group meets at the Central Branch, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Poe Room. Dashiell Hammett's *The Glass Key* will be discussed.

**2:00 p.m.** Borders-Towson. Ted Patterson discusses and signs his book *Day by Day in Baltimore Orioles History*.

**3:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Timonium Crossing. James Lee Burke discusses and signs his second novel set in the lush Texas hill country, *Heartwood*.

Monday, August 30

**7:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Timonium Crossing. Philosophy Book Discussion. Ted Hendricks & Lisa O'Shea lead a discussion on *Nature* by Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Tuesday, August 31

**6:00 p.m.** Lee Meadows reads from and signs his mystery novel, *Silent Conspiracy: A Lincoln Keller Mystery*. Enoch Pratt Free Library, Dundalk Ave. Branch, 912 Dundalk Ave. For more info, call (410) 396-8547.

### Literary September

Monday, September 6

**7:30 p.m.** Barnes & Noble-Towson Circle. Baltimore Writers' Alliance holds its "Writing Work-out."

Tuesday, September 7

**7:30 p.m.** Dana Bloomfield and Curio Coast Productions host "Under the Trumpet Vines" at the Authors Café, York, PA. \$3+ donation requested. Includes "open stage." For more info, call (410) 343-3478, box 5.

Friday, September 10

**7:30 p.m.** Bibelot-Timonium Crossing. Free poetry workshop with poet David Heminway.

Wednesday, September 15

Last day to register for the October 2nd Pen Women's Arts Conference at Essex Community College. Workshops in writing and art. Irish harpist will perform. Keynote speaker. Continental breakfast, lunch, workshops & program only \$22 per person. For more info, call (410) 557-0177.

Saturday, September 18

**1:00-3:00 p.m.** *Late Knocking* literary magazine hosts a free writing workshop at Bibelot-Timonium Crossing.

Friday, September 24-Sunday, September 26

Baltimore Book Festival, Mt. Vernon Square, Baltimore City. *More details in Sept. literary supplement.*

### To Have Your Event Listed

please send information to:  
Dan Cuddy, Calendar Editor  
41 Odeon Ct.  
Baltimore, MD 21234  
Tel. (410) 882-4138

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"Dr. T" would like  
to wish Shadow a  
Very Happy Birthday  
on August 31st.

Stars were winking out. Birds began shattering the blissful desert stillness with their atonal arias. The rock wallaby sat in the shroud-gray light blankly chewing vegetation like a condemned prisoner eating his last meal. My spear was poised. I had a clear shot at the small kangaroo. It just waited, as if to say, "I'm ready; do it. Make it quick. I'm prepared to return to the great oneness. To go back to my Dreaming. As will you, one day."

I pulled my arm back. I held my breath. Then, my eyes blurred and blinked of their own accord. I lowered my arm. Once again, I couldn't make the kill.

"Go on," I yelled. "Get the hell out of here." The wallaby scooted through the spinifex. "And tell all your friends they're safe from the great white hunter," I added.

I threw the spear at the ground. It quivered and listed slightly in the sand. From the branch of a gum tree, a kookaburra shrieked with laughter at me.

"Very funny," I said to the large, gray-backed bird. It perched on the limb and looked down at me with one eye, the other looking off in the distance. I slumped down, and looked off into the distance. How pathetic, I thought. Some Aborigine I'd make. I'm supposed to be proving myself to these people; showing them I can hunt and survive.

What would old Barnimbirr say to me? What would one of the oldest of the tribal elders and my personal mentor think of my cowardice?

He would probably say, "You think too much, Jimmy. We are all part of the whole; all part of the great cycle. The wallaby has his place and we have ours. It has always been this way." A big grin would break out on his face. He was a good man.

An American anthropology student, I was living with Aborigines in the Australian outback. There was much about them I admired. For one thing, their toughness. I was on a walkabout, a solitary test of endurance, cunning, and survival—a test which I had insisted on making—and I couldn't even spear a small kangaroo.

I got up from the sand and brushed off my body, which had turned a deep brown all over, and began walking again. I figured if I was going to do a walkabout, it should be done authentically. In the traditional way—completely naked. Barnimbirr had said he was proud of me for doing it. I felt my research would be less than accurate if I wore clothing. The experience would not be as pure. Besides, who was going to see me out here?

In the east, a slice of sun the color of watermelon had edged above the horizon, and the gray sky had become rinsed to a fresh rosy newness. Far clouds glowed pink against a blue backdrop. The tops of the tall eucalyptus trees caught the light first; then, it ran like paint down their bone-white trunks. Tussocks of grass threw long shadows across the brick-colored sand.

Nearby, over a set of low hills, was a series of billabongs, or water holes. I was thirsty. I marched toward the hills.

Barnimbirr had sung me through this part of his clan's land. I had listened to old Barnimbirr talk about the songlines—the Aborigines' legendary, mysterious, and musical method of knowing about their practical and mystical connection to this land. It was like combining the Old Testament and a natural history textbook and singing the whole thing as epic poetry. But my understanding of it was like a single grain of sand to Barnimbirr's great sandy desert. These so-called "savages" had taken religion, science, and art and

# Every Man Got Dreaming

by  
Brian McQuade

Illustration by Vonnie Winslow Crist

had alchemized them into a profoundly simple and elegant cosmology—the songlines.

Right now, as I headed for the water holes, the only songs were ornithological. More birds were greeting the dawn: yellowtailed cockatoos, gang-gangs, and painted finches with electric feathers like hummingbirds. It was the only music I had (besides my own off-key warbling) and I listened to every note.

Out of the corner of my eye, I noticed movement a few feet away from me. I stopped and stood still. It was a wombat sauntering sloth-like out of its den. The creature also stopped and stared at me. He was no threat to me, though; the wombat is a strict vegetarian, which was more than I could say about myself. I greeted him with a couple of soft words, walked over, and crouched down in front of him. He sniffed me a few times and went on his way, looking for roots to dig up with his fat nose. I felt pleased. Barnimbirr would have thought I was a little crazy for not spearing it. I explained to him how I felt about animals. But he didn't quite get it. We were still communicating across a pretty wide chasm; but it was slowly narrowing.

I came to the water. It was warm on top, but if you reached down and stirred up the cooler water with your hand, it was much better. After drinking, I sat and watched the gang-gangs hanging upside-down on the lantana bushes, pecking at flowers. I drank a little more and sat on the sand again. There was no hurry. There was no pressure to do anything but survive. No one looking over my shoulder. Life is different when all that dissolves into the vibrating air of the outback.

A couple of finches fluttered down nearby and splashed in the shallows. That's odd, I

thought. They're usually not that tame.

As I sat there, a painting of Paul Gauguin's came to mind. The one with the inscription that read "Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?" Good questions. I certainly didn't know. But I knew I was looking for something.

I was sick to death with school. With books and papers. With finishing this damned dissertation.

Coming here to the outback was the best thing I'd ever done. But I felt I had to get a Ph.D. In an academic career, it was de rigueur. I wouldn't be able to accomplish anything without it. What did I want to accomplish? Whose definition of success was I subscribing to? Those were the questions I found myself asking. I wasn't sure of the answers.

My personal life was...well, let's just say the kookaburra would have gotten a good laugh out of that, too. The ashes of yet another burned-out relationship were still fresh in my mind.

Women, for the most part, are just too practical. They wanted things; I wanted ideas. They wanted cities; I wanted nature. They wanted complicated; I wanted simple. Like one of my English teachers used to say: simple is good.

I was starting to feel hungry. Thinking I might find some fresh-water prawns, I headed for the next billabong.

The red slice of watermelon that had perched on the eastern horizon at dawn had become a large white onion of heat. I zig-zagged through the sparse bands of vegetation, grateful to the trees for their shade. Sometimes, I would be just as glad to have the

sun on my skin. It is a good feeling. I liked my brown skin.

I tried to do as old Barnimbirr had told me: do not think; just be aware and open to what's around you. But it's hard for a "civilized" person to do. Too much thinking. Not enough listening.

I approached the water hole quietly. I looked around. There were hollow reeds at the edge. I pulled one, broke off the ends, and made myself a long straw. After inserting a bit of moss in one end as a filter, I pushed the reed down into the water and sucked up a long, cool drink.

Along the way to the billabong, I had passed different kinds of trees: kurrajongs; bottlebrushes; bloodwoods, with their overflowing crimson sap; and the ubiquitous gum trees. But I was on the lookout for a rarer species—what the Aborigines call the quondong. It was a pretty tree, with a symmetrical shape, and from its dense, silvery leaves hang clumps of small sweet fruit. Finally, I spotted one and hooted my thanks across the sand. I still had about two dozen of the golf-ball-sized fruits in my dilly bag. I had also dug up some yams.

Now, after drinking at the reed-lined water hole, I waded in again and stirred up the bottom of the shallows with a branch. Soon, I had yabbies—crayfish—to cook for lunch. After pulling them from the water, I flung them down hard on a flat rock, killing them instantly. I got a fire going and had a meal of the yabbies, yams, and quondong, roasting the crayfish on fire-heated rocks. I spent the rest of the day at the billabong.

The following afternoon, I decided to venture into unfamiliar territory. My feet no longer bothered me; the soles were two solid calluses. I was padding along, thinking about calluses both physical and emotional, when a shadow glided over me. I looked up and saw a wedge-tailed eagle. It soared above a nearby gum tree, wheeling and tilting its huge wings on the air. It was a good thing to see. And as I watched it, I noticed movement in the tree. It was not the row of motionless wonga-wonga birds; it was a koala—the harmless, unassuming eater of leaves. It was on a branch about fifteen feet above the ground.

But it wasn't eating leaves; it was reaching its paw into a hole in the branch and then licking its paw. Sugar bag! The koala had found what we would call wild honey. Maybe he would share some.

I walked over and waited. The teddy bear-like creature stopped licking its gooey paw and rested. It glanced at the eagle and then down at me. I sat down and told the koala I would not move until the bird was out of sight. It tasted its paw again.

When the eagle had flown away, I got up. There was a branch within jumping height, and I hauled myself up. I swung my leg over the branch with the hole. "Is it good?" I asked.

The koala seemed to hold out its paw as if to say, "Yes, you should try some." In my excitement, I was not careful enough and I lost my balance. As I fell in what seemed like slow-motion, the gray-furred animal looked at me quizzically, as if asking, "Where are you going? Don't you want the honey?" Then, I hit the ground. While unconscious, I had a dream.

In the dream, old Barnimbirr was walking toward me out of a morning mist. "Have you found your Dreaming?" he asked.

"I don't know," I said.

"Every man got Dreaming," he told me. "Your Dreaming is your guardian animal spirit. You must not harm your Dreaming; bad things

*Continued on page 5*



Story, cont. from page 4

would happen. It would make death easier to find you. Each must honor his own animal guardian.

"I saw that you could not kill the wallaby. Maybe you are kangaroo man. Some are emu men; others goana and others pelican. But I don't know about you. You find it hard to hurt many things. You have much Dreaming. That is hard."

"Too much dreaming," I agreed. "That's my problem. Will I ever get things figured out?"

"Sure," he said. "No worries." Then, he disappeared back into the mist.

I awoke on the soft sand under the eucalyptus tree. My head hurt. Slowly, I tried moving to a sitting position. I was very lucky; all my limbs worked. And I knew who I was—well, I knew what my name was, anyway. The koala was gone and the sun was low in the west.

I sat there, a little woozy, and watched the sun sink into fractured clouds near the end of the sky and shoot out translucent pillars of vermilion light. At the other end of the world, a full moon had risen. Partially veiled in gauzy clouds, its weathered, yellowish surface reminded me of the tambourine of a celestial harem dancer, dancing before a royal blue curtain, with stars for earrings.

I heard the yip of a dog. A dingo sat silhouetted on the top of a hill, watching a pair of flying foxes row their black leathery wings across the darkening sky. The two large bats were heading for the billabong.

Later, as I sat by the fire, with the stars of the Southern Cross burning like a beacon in the night, I thought of my life back in the States. I felt no real desire to go back to that life. Things were simple here. Not always easy, but simple.

The Aborigines lacked nothing. They enjoyed life. Old Barnimbirr had five wives. He seemed very happy. I wondered what that would be like; what man hasn't? But five? It was hard enough to find one. Five could only be one thing—complicated.

I had plenty to think about. And to look at. I kept walking.

The moon had gone through her phases. I had gotten into a rhythm, too. What kind of rhythm? I wasn't sure. The rhythm of the earth, I guess. I began to think of myself not so much as a human being, not so much Homo sapiens, but as just another animal.

A nearly-full moon had risen blood-red beyond a hill. The next day, I climbed the hill and came to the edge of a bluff. A large patch of trees caught my eye off to the left, and the sparkle of sunlight on water made me blink. It was very hot.

I looked out from the edge of the bluff. Sharp shadows etched the clean sand. There was a sense of space, of openness. Trees thrust up with bark that looked like works of Abstract Expressionism. The world was painted in pastels: pale red sand, lavender wildflowers, spiky lemon-lime grass, burnt-orange rocks, cerulean sky. And water the color of peridot gems. A narrow river livened the land like a green ribbon on a reddish-brown box. The water sang the world into life and chanted off into the distance.

I headed for the trees.

Thatches of high yellow-green grass grew more numerous. I could smell the river now. The scent of moisture-laden molecules was alive in the air. Tall red gums lined the bank; the sun-dappled ground echoed the motif of the tree-mottled bark. As I reached the shade,

the sun-burned air relented and I breathed a sigh of relief. Two black-and-white butcher birds magpied my arrival, and a purple heron flapped its way downstream. Small fish darted in the shallows. The river here passed through a very short canyon. The banks got higher, and on both sides, large red-ochre rocks were strewn like long-forgotten building blocks. A few boulders pushed out of the shining green water, creating a pool deep enough to swim in.

After a swim, I munched on some bauble nuts and a few more quondong, washed down with a very long drink of water. Then, I clambered up to a high flat rock that was shaded by some nearby gum trees. At this point, the big stones petered out and the river flowed away through flat land again.

The sun was lower. Shadows were longer. Birds rested and called weakly to each other. I relaxed a little, trying to clear my mind of thoughts but remaining alert. I listened to everything: the birds, the trees, the water, the fish, even the rocks. But the rocks just sat and listened, too.

Then, a soft but different sound moved the air. Silently, I crept to the edge of the rock and peeked over. A kangaroo was waddling cautiously to the water. It was a gray kangaroo—a good bit larger than the two-and-a-half-foot rock wallaby.

Suddenly, two hefty stones hit the 'roo's head in quick succession, and it fell near the water. A human sprinted from behind a boulder jutting up from the sand about twenty yards away, and finished the animal off with a sharp spear thrust.

The sleek, silent figure had killed the gray with an efficiency born of practice, but it was not a man. Except for a belt and leather pouch, the female hunter was naked. And although darkskinned, she did not look like an Aborigine. She looked like a melange of everything else. Who could she be?

After tucking the rock sling into her pouch, the woman dragged her kill ten yards back from the water. She knelt beside her lifeless prey, speaking unintelligible words and stroking its fur. Then, she looked to the sky and lifted one hand, keeping the other on the still form beside her.

A thick braid of black hair roped its way down her back. Some strands had escaped, however, and they clung to the glistening brown skin of her arms and breasts. With her muscular legs folded beneath her, she sat back on her heels, placed her hands on her lap, and breathed deeply. She bowed her head. Her shoulders stumped and they shook several times. She emitted a short, stifled cry. It appeared she was trying not to weep. I felt a lump in my throat.

The sun was setting. Sitting there in the reddening light, giving thanks and praying to the spirit of the creature beside her that had died by her hand, this woman evoked a vision of the past. A kaleidoscope of images flickered through my brain: hunting and gathering, fires and feasts, drumming and dancing, moons and mating, sons and daughters. And people, by the light of fires, wondering about the mystery of stars, the singing of myths. The dream of the Earth. Romantic notions to most people. But not to the Aborigines. Maybe not to this woman, either.

I felt disoriented. But why? I was in the past, too. The present had become the past—and the past the present. I stood on the rock and stared at the woman.

Without looking up at me, she said, "What the hell are you looking at? Haven't you ever seen a naked woman before?"

She rose to her feet. Turning her body

toward me, the mystery woman crossed her arms under her breasts and shifted her weight to her left leg. She seemed to be waiting for an answer. "Well?" she said, her voice rising at the end.

The moon had risen. On the broken surface of the pool, it rippled and folded like some magical Chinese lantern. I looked back at the woman. Moonlight ricocheted from her intelligent eyes.

"Yes, I have seen a naked woman before," I replied finally. "I've also gazed at a thousand moonrises, and I haven't gotten tired of them yet, either."

She blinked and pursed her lips. "Not bad." "Excuse me, but what are you doing out here?" I asked.

"I'm doing research for my dissertation. Walkabout."

"You're kidding. That's a...that's...what I'm doing."

"Small world, huh?" she said.

"More like small miracle. This is just so...you're American?"

"Yeah. The real kind, too. Navaho. I'm also Spanish, Black African, and, to top it off, one of my great-grandfathers was an Italian Jew. So, I'm one mixed-up shiksa. A real mutt."

"I like mutts. They're down-to-earth. Real."

"Oh, I'm real all right. Real hungry." She smiled. "Say, Tarzan, would you care for some filet de 'roo? My treat."

"Well, Jane, I'm sorry, but I don't think I can."

"Why not?"

"I think I got kangaroo Dreaming. I'm kangaroo man."

"But you didn't kill it, I did."

"You know," I said, "I never thought of that. I may have other Dreamings. I'm not sure. Anyway, I've got some prawns I caught earlier. And yams and fruit and bauble nuts."

"Sounds good. Maybe we could compare notes. That is, if we actually had notes." She looked down, smiling. "It will be nice to have somebody to...hey, wait a minute! My name's Jane. How...?"

"I'm telepathic."

"Yeah, right," she laughed, "and I'm Amelia Earhart."

"Okay, it was a lucky guess," I said.

I had climbed down off the rock. I got a fire started while Jane cleaned the 'roo. Afterwards, we both walked into the water without saying a word. It felt good to be clean. We cooked the food and ate and talked and shared stories and stared into the fire and I didn't even think about the fact that we were naked. Well, maybe once.

"So, Jane," I said at one point, "they say every man got Dreaming. I feel women should be included. What's yours?"

"Thank you, Jimmy. My Dreaming is a little Cape Cod with a white picket fence in the suburbs." I dropped my yam. "I'm kidding," she said. "I don't belong to that world. Never did. Never will. I like keeping things simple. I'm not sure what my Dreaming is. It's an interesting concept. I need more time for research. Maybe you can help me."

"I think I need more time, too." I looked up at the stars.

"Good," she said. I looked at her. Her eyes sparkled.

Jane and I continued our walkabouts. She hunted. I gathered. We swam a lot in the pale green pool.

I still haven't finished my dissertation. Neither has Jane. It's alright, though. We both got Dreaming.



# Lite

Baltimore's Literary Newspaper  
Guidelines for Writers

1. *Lite* is a bi-monthly publication featuring art, literature, and book reviews. Formerly a quarterly magazine, we are now a free tabloid publication carrying one story and several poems per issue. We seek to give emerging writers and artists the opportunity to reach a broad, literate audience, and to keep our readers informed of literary events in Central Maryland. *Lite* is distributed in the Baltimore area and Central Maryland, with a press run of 10,000 copies. We also publish book-length manuscripts in cooperation with authors under the imprints "Lite Circle Books" and "Sunrise Press."

2. *Lite* holds one-time publication rights to all material accepted for publication. All other rights remain the property of the author. Terms of payment: 5 copies of issue in which submission appears.

3. All material submitted to *Lite* must be on plain 8-1/2" x 11" paper, double spaced, typewritten or computer printed, with no handwritten editing or other marks anywhere on the document. Notes concerning the copy may be made in legible handwriting on accompanying separate sheets. Copy must include the author's name, address and telephone number on the first or last page; for multiple simultaneous submissions, each work must be a separate document, each with the author's name, address and telephone. Please include short bio. We will also accept documents via email, or on disk created in WordPerfect or Microsoft Word. Copy submitted in formats not listed here will not be reviewed.

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5. *Lite* reserves the right to do all editing appropriate to maintain grammar, stylistic consistency, and standard punctuation without advance notification to the author. We suggest that deliberate deviations from standard grammar and spelling be noted on a separate sheet to avoid editing problems. *Lite* will do everything possible to advise writers in advance of publication of any proposed changes which may affect the author's meaning or stylistic integrity; writers may withdraw their manuscripts from consideration should they conclude that proposed changes are unacceptable, provided notification is made within three days of notice of proposed changes.

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7. If material is rejected, submissions will not be returned unless a SASE of suitable size with sufficient postage is provided.

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# L I T E B Y T E S

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ We receive a calendar of events for children for the 27 branches of Baltimore's **Enoch Pratt Free Library**. Here are a few examples of events in August. We urge parents to contact their local library for a schedule of events.

· **Govans Branch**, 5714 Bellona Ave., (410) 396-6098. Saturday, August 14 at 2 p.m.: "Summer Reading Program Luau" and "Michael the Magician." Ages 3 & up. Awesome entertainment, tropical refreshments, prizes and fun.

· **Hamilton Branch**, 5910 Harford Rd., (410) 396-6088. Thursday, August 5 at 3 p.m.: "Goombay, The Caribbean Experience." Take a musical tour of the Caribbean Islands with David Boothman, Elizabeth Melvin and Larry Griffin. Also on Thursdays in August, 11 a.m.: "Laptime Storytime." For 2 year-olds & their caregivers. Books, finger plays, songs & bean bags.

· **Herring Run Branch**, 3801 Erdman Ave., (410) 396-0996. Thursday, August 5 at 1:30 p.m.: Spencer "Spinny" Johnson presents "Basketball Tricks." Monday, August 16 & August 30 at 10:30 a.m.: "Preschool Stories & Crafts. Ages 3 to 5. Registration required. Wednesdays, August 11 & August 25 at 1 p.m.: "Summer Film Program." Ages 5 to 12.

■ A new literary and arts magazine, **Quasar Review**, is requesting submissions of short fiction, critiques, essays and commentaries (3,000 words maximum) which should be typed and double-spaced. Art submissions welcome. No poetry please. Must include SASE. Send to *Quasar Review*, 14 Gala Lane, Baltimore, MD 21218.

■ **smartish pace**, a new poetry journal, is now accepting submissions. It will consider any length, style, and subject matter. Submit 3 to 5 poems. No previously published poems. Simultaneous submissions OK. E-mail submissions encouraged. Cover letter with bio preferred. Acquires first serial rights. December 1 deadline for spring publication. June 1 deadline for fall publication. Send submissions to: *smartishpace*, P.O. Box 22161, Baltimore, MD 21203. For e-mail: submissions to *Djoetodd@aol.com*. For correspondence: *smartishpace@hotmail.com*

■ **BMA Summer Jazz Series**. The final two jazz concerts at the Baltimore Museum of Art are scheduled in August:

· **Keter Betts Quartet** on Saturday, August 7 at 7 p.m. Veteran bassist Keter Betts has performed with such superstars as Ella Fitzgerald, Dinah Washington, Roberta Flack and Charlie Byrd. He brings his company to Baltimore for an evening of straight ahead jazz.

· **FanFan and Friends** on Saturday, August 21 at 7 p.m. This Washington-based group led by award-winning guitarist Joseph Louis offers up Haitian and African-influenced jazz.

For more information on the Summer Jazz Series, call BMA Public Programs at (410) 396-6314.

■ **The Dundalk Community Theatre** is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season this coming year. The productions scheduled are:

· **Forever Plaid** by Stuart Ross, musical arrangements by James Raitt. September 24-26, October 1-3. Take a nostalgic musical trip back to the 1950s with 30 hit songs including, "Catch a Falling Star," "Heart and Soul," and many more.

· **A Christmas Carol: Scrooge & Marley** by Israel Horowitz. November 19-21, 26-28.

· **Moon Over Buffalo** by Ken Ludwig. February 25-27, March 3-5. Hilarious misunderstandings pile on madcap misadventures as this second rate acting troupe builds up laughs, shtick by shtick.

· **Camelot**. Book and Lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner. Music by Frederick Loewe. May 5-7, 12-14.

The Dundalk Community Theatre is located at 7200 Sollers Point Rd, Dundalk. The Box Office phone is (410) 285-9667.

■ **The Baltimore Folk Music Society** presents over 150 traditional music and dance events and special concerts each year. BFMS activities include traditional American and English dances, concerts of diverse musical traditions, participatory sing-alongs, music and dance weekends in the Catoctin Mountains, picnic with singing, dancing and instrument playing, and a variety of special events that appeal to folk of all ages. For up-to-date schedules of events call the BFMS Event Hotline at (410) 366-0808, or visit the website: [www.bfms.org](http://www.bfms.org).

■ **Question**: What are the "three conditions" and why are some people in the Baltimore literary community excited?

■ **The Baltimore Playwrights Festival** continues its 18<sup>th</sup> consecutive season in August with the opening of five new world premieres by Maryland playwrights:

· **Caz** by Kathleen Barber (Uncommon Voices Theatre Company), directed by Barry Feinstein. Fells Point Corner Theatre, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 251 S. Ann St. Runs Thur. through Sat. at 8 p.m. & Sun. at 7 p.m. through Aug. 8. Reservations: (410) 788-1489.

· **Keeping the Faith** by Carol Weinberg (Goucher College), directed by Bob Bardoff. Spotlighters Theatre, 817 St. Paul St. Runs Fri. & Sat. at 8 p.m., Aug. 6-28. Tickets \$10, seniors \$9 and students \$7. Reservations: (410) 752-1225.

· **Falling Grace** by Mark Scharf (Directors Choice Theatre), directed by Maria Lakkala. Black Box Theatre, River Hill High School, 12101 Rt. 108 (at 32) in Clarksville, near Columbia. Runs Fri. & Sat. at 8 p.m., Sun. at 2 p.m., Aug. 6-22. Tickets \$10, seniors and students \$8. Reservations: (410) 418-5247.

· **Joe Pete** by Jim Sizemore (Fells Point Corner Theatre), directed by Richard Dean Stover. FPCT, 251 S. Ann St. Runs Thur. through Sat. at 8 p.m., Sun. at 7 p.m., Aug. 12-29. Tickets \$11 on Sat., \$10 all other times, \$9 for seniors/students at all times. Reservations: (410) 276-7837.

· **Gladys in Wonderland** by Rosmary Frisno Toohey (Vagabond Players), directed by Betty May. Vagabond Theatre, 806 S. Broadway. Runs Fri. & Sat. at 8 p.m., Sun. at 7 p.m. Tickets \$10, seniors and students \$9. Reservations: (410) 563-9135.

■ **The deadline for script submission for next summer's festival** is September 30, 1999. Please send SASE to request BPF guidelines to: Baltimore Playwrights Festival, 251 S. Ann St., Baltimore, MD 21231. This year's winners in the categories of Best Play and Best Production will be announced in mid-September. For more info, call (410) 276-2153.

■ **The Baltimore Writers' Alliance Conference: Literary Arts 2000: Writing and Getting Published** is to be held November 13, 1999 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Univer-

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*Lyte Bytes, cont. from page 6*

sity Union building of Towson University. Featured speakers are Christopher Dickey, son of the late poet James Dickey and author of *Summer of Deliverance: A Memoir of Father and Son*, and Lyn Lifshin, the widely published poet, author of more than 100 books and editor of four anthologies of women writers. For more information, either call Barbara Diehl at (410) 377-5265 or email her at [hdiehl@bcpl.net](mailto:hdiehl@bcpl.net).

■Celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Apollo 11 and the first moon landing. Check out the “**Life in Space**” Exhibit at the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch, 400 Cathedral St., Baltimore. Runs through Aug. 19. See moon rock replicas, a space suit, photos and other items on loan from the Johnson and Goddard Space Flight Centers and Northrop Grumman Corp. Special limited showing of an authentic moon rock: Aug. 3-19. For more info, see the website: [www.pratt.lib.md.us](http://www.pratt.lib.md.us).

■Readers: *Lite* wants to know: **what were YOU doing** when Neil Armstrong made “one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind?” Email us at [pkinlock@bcpl.net](mailto:pkinlock@bcpl.net) and tell us what you remember. Excerpts from the most interesting accounts will be printed in an upcoming issue of this newspaper. *Prerequisite*: you must be old enough to remember *firsthand* where you were at that historic moment; but no, you don’t have to tell us your age (unless you want to)!

■Patti Kinlock, Managing Editor of this newspaper, has recently had a broadside of poems published in the new series **First Lite**. It is called *Night Queen*.

■Del Marbrook, who has an article in this paper, has recently had a novel published online. It is called *Alice Miller’s Room*, and will be reviewed here in the October/November issue. The novel is published by “Online Originals.” To read it on the web, punch in [www.onlineoriginals.com](http://www.onlineoriginals.com).

■Attendees at the July 17 **Poetry in the Shade** reading at Something Special Coffee Shop in Laurel were certainly treated to something special with an impromptu jazz performance on sax and piano by up-and-coming musicians Jeremy King and Andy Caron. Guys: please let *Lite* know when you come up with a name for your band. The music was toe-tappingly cool—thanks and please give us an encore!

■An open mike **Refugee Relief Reading** was held Saturday, June 12, 1999, 8 p.m. at Bibelot-Woodholme to raise money for Kosovar refugees. Judy Ford, a representative from the Central Maryland chapter of the Red Cross, opened the evening reading excerpts from accounts written by refugees about life in the camps, conditions in Kosovo, wanting to go home, being reunited with missing relatives via the internet, etc. She discussed Red Cross humanitarian efforts and answered questions from a small but receptive audience. The open reading offered diverse, emotional readings from Alan Barysh, Jonathan (a teacher and first-time reader who, if you are reading this, you did wonderfully), Richard Lane, Jean Cushman, Dana Bloomfield, Dan Cuddy, Jim Richmond, Dave Kriebel, and Patti Kinlock. The evening was hosted by Dave Kriebel and Patti Kinlock and raised at least \$90 for the American Red Cross.

The sponsors (independent local poets) wish to thank Judy Ford and the Maryland chapter of the American Red Cross for their enthusiastic participation in this event, and we salute the Red Cross in general for its humanitarian support of those in need, regardless of creed,

politics, or location. While the refugee crisis is no longer making headlines, the need still exists and relief efforts continue. For more info about what you can do to help, visit the Maryland Red Cross website at: [www.redcross-cmd.org](http://www.redcross-cmd.org).

Special thanks to John Schweitzer, Jim Richmond, Dina Feinberg, and Tim “Dr. T” Kinlock for their help with this event. Watch this space for related announcements/developments.

■**The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Margaret Diorio Arts & Peace Poetry Reading** was held in June at the Stony Run Friends Meeting House. David Kriebel, Virginia Bates, Chester Wickwire, Thomas Dorsett, Susan Fleishman, Dan Cuddy, Linda Joy Burke, Sam Schmidt, Bill Sullivan, and Alan Barysh read. Thomas Dorsett also read Margaret’s poems and played a musical composition called “Dream” on the piano. After the regular readers a black gentleman read a couple of stirring poems that he had written. (Unfortunately *Lite* didn’t get his name. If he or someone else who knows his name will contact *Lite*, we will publish it in the October *Lite Bytes*. We want to give credit where credit is due.

■**The Hamilton and/or Hamilton Street Festival poetry contest**—the best poem on Hamilton and/or the festival, held already on July 31st (note—the poem can be about Hamilton in general), and under 25 lines will be published in *Lite Bytes*. All entries in this informal contest must be received by Sept 1, 1999. Send direct to Dan Cuddy, whose address is in this paper.

■It has been said that the fiction judge for this year’s *Artscape* didn’t find any of the eight submissions worthy of a prize. It was also said that the judge offered to edit a story or two and then award the prize. The question is why wouldn’t the judge be a little less aloof and give the award to the best of the 8. There were quite a few competent authors. Also we are not talking about the National Book Awards. If the judge didn’t want to sully her name with awarding a piece of blemished fiction, she has done it anyway by snobbishly turning up her nose at some hard-working and aspiring Baltimore writers, and at the literary community here in general.

■Also it has been said that the four dramas submitted for the **Artscape Playwrighting Prize** were unstageable. Beyond that nothing has been said.

■It has not been a great year for the local literary community at *Artscape*. However, *Lite* is happy that Hiram Larew, nominated by Ed Faine’s *Fodderwing Magazine*, was the **1999 Poetry Award Winner**. And *Lite* wants to also congratulate Niki Leopold, nominated by *Passager*, and Christine Hohmann, nominated by *Gimme Shelter Productions*, for being 1999 Poetry Merit Winners. Also, *Lite* wants to shake the hand of Belle Waring for being a judge who took her duty seriously.

■**Feedback.** *Lite* sincerely hopes that *Artscape* event staff and security will be more on the ball next year. We suggest a) do not oversell spaces in the literary (or other) tents; b) check the logistics before vendors arrive and make sure there is enough space for everyone—no one who has paid for a space should be sitting with their wares in the hot sun or rain; and c) do not permit vendors to steal others’ pre-assigned, pre-paid table spaces and then do nothing about it. It is a shame when members of Baltimore’s literary community do not have the maturity or decency to respect the rights of others. We sincerely hope that *Artscape* will do more to support the local arts community which has supported it all these years.

## Stained Glass Jesus

A stained glass Jesus greets his guests with open palms,  
as a toddler chases rainbow prisms  
on the red carpet.  
*Ave Maria* fills the room and  
smiling friends stand in perfect rows.  
I wait for yet another friend  
to float down the aisle,  
into the sunset with her mate.

When I see Jim’s tenderness as he lifts Anna’s veil,  
I regret my single status.  
I reach for my maiden Aunt’s Irish lace hankie and  
cry because Anna looks like a Rossetti painting,  
and my taffeta bridesmaids dresses hang in my closet  
like tired, dusty soldiers—  
too old for battle.

I cry because PMS is worse after 40  
and my face still breaks out.  
I cry when I see a perky teen  
scooping my double brownie cone—  
she could be mine.  
And I don’t mind her pierced tongue;  
I admire her rebellion.  
I hated my parents much later.

I kiss Anna’s porcelain cheek in the reception line.  
She whispers in my tear stained ear,  
“You’re going to hate me.  
Jim’s single friend  
flew to Boston and can’t make our wedding.”  
“Sorry, we’ll find you another dance partner,”  
Jim squeezes my hand in sympathy.  
Wearing a sizzling black lace dress,  
I sit at an empty table.  
All 100 couples are dancing.  
Like prospecting for gold after the Rush,  
I find no single suitors.

I sway in place to *Stardust*,  
picking at my salad.  
A stunning woman in sequins sits besides me.  
“I’m Lil,” her delicate hand covers mine.  
“You’re a wonderful dancer,” I say.  
“Morty and I are learning ballroom.”  
Morty, a shriveled man wearing a toupee,  
nibbles crudite in the distance like a squirrel.  
“How did you two meet?”  
I try to hide my surprise.

“We met several years ago at a singles dance.”  
“I wasn’t interested, but he was so persistent.”  
“It’s funny,” she reminisces,  
“I loved my life before I met him,  
but every night I prayed to stars,  
‘I’m bursting with love to give,  
please send me a decent man.’”

Her eyes drift back to mine,  
“Morty’s a good man, very self-centered though.  
Asked me to give up my house and a job I loved.”  
With eyes averted, she adds, “And he’s 10 years older.  
Had five heart attacks.  
I’d have to go outside the marriage to get my needs met.  
But I don’t.  
Besides, I have my poodle, Claude.”

As Lil’s sad soliloquy ends, an unsuspecting Morty leads her  
to the dance floor.  
He holds her Scarlett O’Hara waist;  
she dances without passion.  
I feel like a priest at confession.  
But priests cannot judge.  
Why did Lil marry a man she didn’t love?  
I stare at the stained glass Jesus, waiting for an answer.  
Be careful what you pray for, echoes, echoes, echoes in my ears.

Joan Allen

## Lite Reading: BOOK REVIEWS

PARADISE REGAINED

***Inheriting Paradise: Meditations on Gardening.*** By Vigen Guroian. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, \$9.)

You don't have to be a gardener to enjoy this little book by theologian Vigen Guroian. You don't even have to be a Christian, although it helps a great deal—most of Guroian's references are to biblical material and the works of Christian writers, and he states up front that the book has grown out of his theological writings. But you do have to be open to the pre-Enlightenment view of the world that unites mind and body, nature and humanity, cosmos and God. In such a world, the doings in a backyard garden can have consequences for the soul.

In this book, Guroian uses his own life history, illuminated by the work of poets such as the psalmist, Hopkins, Dickinson, and Eliot, to show how a garden can awaken our sensitivity to the sacredness of the world. Events from the sacred and secular years are woven together as he tells how his own garden has changed his life, helped bring him out of depression, and deepened his faith. Along the way, he teaches us about the nuances of the Christian religion and corrects some modern misconceptions. Guroian uses exceptionally lyrical language in the text, so that it almost seems to be an extended prose poem. This is a beautiful book.

Not everyone will receive this work with enthusiasm. Non-Christians may be alienated by its Christian grounding, Protestants who are accustomed to thinking of sacraments as remembrances, rather than efficacious symbolic actions, may decry some of the material presented here as magic. However, as someone raised in an intellectual Protestant tradition, I have found in this book the seeds for a renewal, a reimagining, of my own faith. I plan to tend those seeds by reading it again this summer.

DAVID W. KRIEBEL

***Great Writers Great Stories.*** Fiction edited by Edward Allan Faine. (IM Press, \$13.99)

Again, eclectic is the only work that can be used to describe this most recent publication of IM Press, under the editorship of Edward Allan Faine.

A veritable smorgasbord of 27 well written fiction pieces have been selected to represent the talented writing community of the Maryland, Virginia and Washington, D.C. area. The stories, all previously published in Faine's literary magazine, *Fodderwing*, challenge the reader to stand up and take notice of the creativity that exists in his own back yard.

Vonnie Crist contributes a folklorish tale of her encounter with a "Toad In the Garden," which has a sensuous and earthy conclusion. Michael Parrish's "Our Coal Is Black" tale will make any editor think twice before rejecting any manuscript. After all—who knows what a crazed writer is apt to do? In addition, Tim Poland's "Nice Fish" is well worth the read with its excellent dialogue and unexpected ending as well as Judy Pomeranz's

"Black Coffee," a tale of disillusionment and discovery where the reader can identify with the heroine.

Faine also has showcased several other writers such as Lalita Nahronha-Blob, Barbara Diehl, Sally Steenland and Leslie Pietrzyk: all offering a wide range of topics, settings, and point of view experiences. With such a wide range of tastes and styles, there is something for everyone in this unique collection of fiction.

W. H. STEVENS

***Longs Peak.*** Poetry by Chester Wickwire. Edited by Clarinda Harriss. (Chestnut Hills Press, \$10.)

Chester Wickwire, who is Chaplain Emeritus of Johns Hopkins University, treats the reader to a panoramic view of his life from his childhood in Colorado to his struggle with polio and then to his activist life and travels to foreign lands.

With over 80 years of living, learning and wisdom behind him, Wickwire's joys, pains and humor pour through his pen for everyone to appreciate and experience.

Wickwire's experiences with religion as a boy ("The Road") describe a mother taking her son on a "journey" where snippets of scripture appear here and there along the way...and in the end, ironically, the boy rejects "the sea of glass" and chooses to "talk through the woods."

In "Guatemala, Holy Week, 1985," a woman and her children are martyred during the night and the next day, breakfast is eaten and life goes on in silence. When dusk comes "eyes of religious statues speak of infinite sadness" and "a priest prayed God's forgiveness..." This memorable piece leaves the reader with a sense of anguish and pulls at his conscience through what the poet says and what he doesn't need to say.

Wickwire's experiences lead the reader to "The Ward" where he describes life as a polio patient. He is "hit by odors of medicine, urine, excrement" and "hangs out for half a year...beside Jesse from Stiles Brickyard." Thus, sickness hits everyone: no one is immune.

In "Squirrels," Wickwire's observant nature and clever description of the "shade tail rodent" brings a knowing smile to the reader as he describes them as little animals "who look like a coffee pot" on the lawn.

It is difficult indeed to be able to touch all of the poems in this little volume because they are each works of art, appealing to all levels of emotions—leaving the reader with a different reaction to each which touch the soul.

Well worth the read, this is poetry at its best and now all that is left to be said is, "Will there be a second volume?"

W. H. STEVENS

***Between Here and There.*** Poems by Danuta E. Kosk-Kosicka. (Ph. D. Publications, Baltimore, MD, \$5.)

The beautiful imagery and the dreamy references to color are the two things which grab the reader's attention in Danuta E. Kosk-Kosicka's first chapbook, *Between Here and There*.

Born and educated in Poland, Kosk-Kosicka writes as an artist creates about her native land, using striking words as her paint brush. She speaks of "May in Poland, warm

*Continued on p. 9*

## LITERARY NEWS

*Cont. from front cover*

Sports Hall of Fame journalist and civil rights activist, Sam Lacy, had tables in the tent. Of course, *Lite* was there with its new publications: *Lower Than The Angels*, an anthology of science fact, science fiction and fantasy edited by Vonnie Winslow Crist and David W. Kriebel; and Virginia Aten Pritchett's book of poetry, *A Fine Thin Thread*. Who were some of the bright lites that stopped by the tent those three days? Here are the names of a few: Minas Konsolas, Mia Emerson and her sister Julie Scharper, Tom Chambers, Mary Azrael, Elizabeth Stevens, John Hayes, Leslie Miller and her sister who is expecting, Rebecca Motil and her husband, Lynn Dewitt, Lou Cedrone and his wife, Maria Broom, Michael Olesker, Tom Swiss, R. Monroe Smith (Bob Smith), Whitney Kurtz and her fiancée Dave Worley, Danuta Kosk-Kosicka and family, Matt Hohner and his girlfriend Jen Andiorio, Linda Joy Burke, Alan Barysh, Jamie Wasserman, Lisa Hurowitz, Susan Sweeney, Betty Weitz, Agnes Osinski, Dina and Stefan Feinberg, Steve Heck and friend Beth Miller, and local HTS cameraman Steve Farrell and his very pregnant wife, Nancy. They were only a few people. I will not mention Barbara Simon, Rosemary Klein, Barbara Diehl, Ed Faine, Virginia Crawford, Sam Schmidt, Marisa Canino, Bradley Paul, Scott Morrow, or my own brother, John Cuddy. And there are others who I will really not mention. All in all there were a lot of people there.

As a footnote for future entrepreneurs, it has to be said that if money is your thing, forget books. Go into food—\$5 bucks for the cheapest sandwich & \$2 for the cheapest drink. A lot of \$7 bucks passed from one hand to another. Food for the soul? It was there but it doesn't sell like food.

DAN CUDDY

### Doodads and Doodah Over Content: How the Print Mavens Cover the Net

Why do journalists cast online publishing in terms of gewgaws in Nerdsville? Why is their focus on gadgetry rather than content? Could it be because their conglomerate masters, like earlier princes of the church sniffing the printing press, see it as a threat to their dominance?

The Hollywood-Manhattan axis controls the infotainment industry, and that increasingly includes the news. It decides what we read, what we see and what we hear. The litmus test for a book these days is will it make a movie? The Internet menaces their dominance. That is why they will go on snubbing its content until they can figure out a way to control it. They will go on pretending it smells bad until they can figure out how to wring money out of it. Then they'll peddle it like video arcade violence.

Take *Salon*, an online magazine in which the Borders book chain has an interest. Its medium, its reason for being, is the Internet and yet it haughtily declines to review web-published books.

The newspapers hasten to report the faintest demarches in Internet stock and technology, but they review no web publishing. Is this because literature published on the web is meretricious? Yes, often. But can they say with a straight face that much of what is published in Manhattan is not? The truth is that web publishers, like their pricey paper-eating confreres, publish vanity work, subsidy work, bad work, and occasionally very good work.

Writing about gadgetry attracts advertising from the gadget makers. Writing about Internet stock serves a well-defined readership. But there is no profit for the print medium in covering web literature. Web publishers rarely have any kind of advertising budget. Under the circumstances can the print medium say it is doing an honest job reporting the millennial events reshaping society?

The Gutenberg press took power out of the hands of the church and the aristocracy. It opened the door to the Enlightenment and to the social revolutions that changed the world forever. The United States and Protestantism are premier gifts of the printing press. And just as the church and its calligraphers perceived the threat, so the infotainment industry perceives the threat of the Internet and contrives desperately to bring it under control.

We are heading into the millennium distracted by Kosovo, Y2K, an inherently boring presidential race, campaign reform, taxes—ephemeral issues dwarfed in magnitude by the significance to the world of the Internet. And distracted is exactly what the media poobahs wish us to be. The conglomerate dumb-down machine is in overdrive, entertaining us with noise and violence in the hope that we won't notice that the fine arts are being killed off as surely as if by censorship. It is censorship, dollar censorship. To cover the real news—the transfer of wealth from the poor to the rich, the criminal state of medical care, for starters—is much more expensive than standing outside a court-

*Continued on p. 9*

Need an event covered? Call News Editor  
Dan Cuddy at (410) 882-4138.



SpotLite, cont. from page 8

house in Washington waiting to be spoon-fed by Ken Starr's leaksters. To cover real news costs a great deal more than dishing up celebrity trumpetry. To sell the next *Ulysses* or *Possession* or *Winter's Tale* costs a great deal more than selling the stupefying pap of some celebrity with a following. We are being dumbed down so the rich can get richer, and the Internet has poked a hole in the shroud thrown over our minds.

The situation is rich with sobering thoughts. If Don DeLillo had not already earned his cult following, if he were an unknown trying to publish the acclaimed *Underworld* it might well not be published, and if it were published on the web, where would it be reviewed?

See for yourself. See what *Online Originals*, *Hard Shell Word Factory*, *OverDrive Press*, *Boson Books* and *The Richmond Review*, to name a few, are publishing, and ask yourself whether a print medium that purports to reflect the Zeitgeist is doing a fair job. Or is it censoring the Zeitgeist? And if so, in whose name?

DEL MARBROOK

### Following that Electronic Wave Into the New Century: More About E-Publishing

Maryland Romance Writers will host a panel of experts (authors and editors) to answer questions and discuss electronic publishing at the next meeting, Wednesday, September 8, 7:30 p.m., at the Columbia Library, 6600 Cradlerock Way.

MRW member Eileen Buckholtz, a master computer scientist and multi-published author, will represent the non-fiction segment of e-publishing. Virginia Romance Writers president Linda Campbell will answer questions on submitting fiction to e-publishers and promoting your work on the Internet. Linda De-Leon Campbell and best friend Bobby Terry write together as Terry Campbell. Their books are short, contemporary romances which also happen to be screwball comedies. New local e-publisher Mika Boblitz of Wakefield Publishing in Pasadena, MD will also be present. Her company is open to romance submissions now (see [www.vnovels.com](http://www.vnovels.com)). They will publish only romance and women's fiction. Panelist Angelica Hart, New Concepts Publishing author, is known in real life as Cynthia Anne DiSciullo. She says, "people often think there are two authors at work, but both Cynthia and Angelica are one person." She chose a pen name to match her genre. An alternate speaker is Jean Marie Ward, publisher at *Crescent Blues* ezine (see [www.crescentblues.com](http://www.crescentblues.com)).

Directions: Take route 29 to Brokenland Parkway East. At the 2nd traffic light, take a left on Cradlerock North. The library is the circular building on the right.

For more info, email Robin at: [rlbayne@juno.com](mailto:rlbayne@juno.com).

ROBIN BAYNE

[Editor's note: Robin Bayne is the author of *The Will of Time* (New Concepts, Aug. '99) and *His Brother's Child* (Mountain View), available now. For more info, visit <http://nbayne.com/child.htm>.]

## EDITORIAL

# From 2001 to Eyes Wide Shut: Our Stolen Future in Space

As a boy, one of the earliest books I remember reading was called *You Will Go to the Moon*. Time and time again, I returned to that book, re-reading the story of a boy who traveled to the moon, seeing myself in that role. As a result, I grew up thinking that I would indeed go to the moon one day. Not as a specially-trained astronaut, either, but as an ordinary citizen. I came to believe that we as a people had a future in space.

Another inspiration was Kubrick's movie version of Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, which depicted an extensive turn-of-the-millennium human presence in space, including a large space station, a moon base, and manned deep-space travel. And now in 1999, 30 years after the first humans first set foot on the moon, a mere two years before the film was supposed to have taken place, our policymakers stand with eyes wide shut, refusing to acknowledge the need for an ambitious program of space exploration and colonization.

Part of this has to do with how the original space program was sold to the public—as a means of "beating the Russians." Now that the Cold War is over, that line doesn't work anymore. What vision has come to replace it? Funds for the international space station have been cut so much that the currently planned version is a shadow of its former self, little more than a replacement for Mir. It is questionable whether our international partners, notably the Russians, will hold up their end of the deal, delaying construction for years. As far as I am aware, there is no manned mission to Mars planned for the foreseeable future, and no moon base looms on the horizon. Funding for NASA has been slashed dramatically ever since the early 70s, when the last humans landed on the moon. The greatest cuts have been under the present administration, which, aided by a Congress in a budget-cutting mood, has reduced

NASA's already minuscule allocation by 30 percent.

But NASA also must shoulder its share of blame for the failure of vision. This newspaper offered NASA free advertising in the current issue, but a NASA public relations official declined our offer, saying "we don't need publicity." If NASA officials themselves aren't passionate about their mission, how can they expect the public to be? Space scientists working for NASA and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory also miss the point when they deny that manned exploration of space is necessary, claiming that robots alone can do the job. While it is true that much can be learned from unmanned probes, there is no substitute for a human on-site to make decisions and react to changing conditions. No neural net exists which can match the human brain's pattern-matching, and hence, analytic capability. Programming can only go so far. Even more important, manned flight can capture the public imagination in a way no program of unmanned exploration can. I can't imagine being inspired by that children's book if it were called "Your Robot Will Go to the Moon."

We need to be in space. Space colonies will produce untold raw resources, provide a home for the increasingly unmanageable human population, give us greater perspective on our place in the universe, and provide a safety net in case of a global catastrophe such as an asteroid impact. We have the technology now to explore our destiny in space, but what is needed is political vision and will. If bureaucrats and politicians will not supply these qualities, then ordinary citizens must step into the breach. We must set aside the desire for short-term gain and fix our gaze upon the stars. It's time to take back the future.

DAVID W. KRIEBEL

*David W. Kriebel*  
Editor

LiteReading, cont. from page 8

days, evenings not willing to sleep, simmering desires..." ("Lilac Lilacs") which are reminiscent of filmy, Monet-like dreams. These effects of her work continue throughout the manuscript such as in her description of "Lunch in the Orchard" where "sunflowers escaped...where Queen Anne's Laces float and sundrunk butterflies hang."

Kosk-Kosicka, who has a Ph.D. in biochemistry, not only uses vibrant imagery in her descriptions of the nature around her, but continues to take the reader to another level as a scientist when she describes what it was like to have medical tests performed on her

heart: "my blood was red and blue. The colors changed...a spilling lightening stormed" ("Echo").

Plus, in her touching account of losing a loved one, her use of color is so vivid one can almost step off of the printed page and be with the writer in beauty and sadness ("Maple Leaves").

With the use of so few words to say so much, Kosk-Kosicka has accomplished her goal to leave the reader waiting for more of this intelligent, artistic work to appear in yet another volume.

W. H. STEVENS

## POETRY BALTIMORE

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# Lite

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## Beyond the Sunset of San Gabriel

Looking into you  
perfect circle of composed fire,  
I melt behind San Gabriel  
submerged in shielded flames  
before this altar of steep granite  
jutting eternally higher

I cannot reach the mountain—  
the mountain reaches me,  
giving in unknown ways:  
teaching me the lesson of agelessness.  
A halo mists, visible only when night  
crawls from the bottom of the Pacific  
bluff by bluff to the heights of the flickering rim  
then jumps off, its huge wingspread over the western  
earth

There is no fear in pitch blackness  
if eyes set themselves higher than peaks  
where, in radiant silence, stellar angels stare,  
Draco, Polaris, Vega—teaming lodestars  
poised to guide earthly pathfinders

There would be no star messengers  
if the universe did not first disappear  
behind midnight blue, where mountains kneel,  
dusk dissolves into stillness, silence  
true time

—MiMi Zannino  
© 1999 *Lower Than The Angels* (Lite Circle Books).

## Black as Night

Did you know  
there's a hydra  
in the sky?  
He's out there,  
largest constellation  
winding across  
one-quarter of  
our universe.

Seems myths say  
Apollo sent his  
silvery white messenger,  
Raven to fetch him  
a cup of water.  
Raven had other plans  
when he got a craving  
for ripe figs, so  
he took his time,  
tarried under a tree  
waiting for his  
pick of the fruit.

Raven had not been prompt  
so he snatched a snake  
from his watery abode,  
used him as a late slip.  
But Apollo in his  
angry thirst, flung  
the bird, the hydra and  
the cup across the skies.

Now hydra is King  
of the sky.  
And Raven?  
He's just a common  
crow—black as night.

—W. H. Stevens  
© 1999 *Lower Than The Angels* (Lite Circle Books).

## When I See Rigel's Light Sleeting Through the Side of Heinlein Station

When I see Rigel's light sleeting through the side of Heinlein Station  
Gleaming red from floating dust and bright on broken metal edges  
Lighting the corridors a color the station's crew never saw  
Through a hole where bodies drifted in final decompression  
When I remember the centuries that this vessel drove through the void  
Toward an unknown, an alien and hostile destination  
When I feel the emptiness that fills it  
That pulls my suit into a puffed and stiffened bubble  
So that I am as awkward and strange in these chambers as Rigel's light  
I wonder how the legends of Earth must lie, must hide the truth  
I wonder why, what horrors our ancestors hid from us  
With their tales of blue skies and green hills  
And lies those tales must surely be  
I know this when I see how they struggled to come here  
If Earth were fair and beautiful, as they told us  
Then how could they have left?

—Lawrence Watt-Evans  
© 1989 *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*.  
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## The Woman in the Moon

Who will be there  
to photograph earthrise  
& marvel  
as she plants her boot  
in Neil Armstrong's dusty footprint?

Who will be there  
watching stars blink on  
one by one  
as the big blue marble  
fades to a turquoise crescent?

Who will be there  
to speak the name  
of the indigo shadow eclipsing the sun  
expunging her soul  
in cold celestial silence?

P.E. Kinlock

## Apollo 11

On July 20, 1969,  
at the Manor Care Nursing Home  
in the second floor television room,  
two gnarled women and I watched  
Buzz Aldrin land *The Eagle*.  
I can't remember breathing  
when Neil Armstrong descended  
the lunar module's stairs,  
when his left foot stirred the dust  
of *The Sea of Tranquility*.  
I do remember the hour: 10:56 p.m.,  
long past patients' lights-out,  
my nursing aide shift almost ended—  
but none of us left the flickering images.  
"That's one small step for man, one giant  
leap for mankind," Neil exclaimed.  
"Humankind," a resident corrected  
as she leaned closer to the TV,  
raised an arthritic hand,  
"humankind."  
Beyond the set,  
through thermal-plated windows,  
I studied the moon  
and knew that 240,000 miles away,  
three men looked up into the black sky  
at a blue-green sphere  
with the same longing.

—Vonnie Winslow Crist

## Vigil for Comet West

While my parents slept, I waited downstairs,  
alone with my telescopes;  
the refractor I'd taken apart, rebuilt,  
come up with extra pieces

and the reflector I'd constructed  
from Mom's pink plastic magnifying mirror  
and an eight-inch looking glass from Uncle Charlie's  
which fit that corrugated cardboard tube.

I watched the hours go. The TV played  
black and white shows on cable  
made when we were conquering space,  
before our eyes settled on smaller things,

and I wished again for that wonder,  
first felt at the World's Fair  
in the World of Tomorrow, recalling only  
the tallness of being among great things.

At three a.m., at four a.m., at five  
I slipped outside and stood on the front porch,  
charting the recession of the blackness,  
until that first blue paling

came like the world before Adam,  
and I saw myself in the distant east  
walking alone, the sky in the background.  
The comet appeared when I wasn't looking—

a little slot of light between the houses.  
I turned the refractor, sighting,  
then cradled the reflector in my arms,  
fighting to calm the image as it squirmed.

But when it stilled, I saw no detail there,  
no blemish in the comet's perfect face  
which sat there, fading on my glass  
until what light there was, was swallowed

by the sun.

—David W. Kriebel  
© 1999 *Lower Than The Angels* (Lite Circle Books).

# From the Earth to the Moon and Beyond: Our Future in Space

by Dale S. Arnold

With the 30th anniversary of the first moon landing this July many people are asking themselves where we are in the human exploration and development of space. Several recent discoveries like the evidence of ice at the lunar poles and the confirmed metal composition of asteroids make grand space projects like solar power satellites and space colonies far more practical than ever before. Innovative new single stage-to-orbit vehicles like the Roton, X-33 Venturestar, and the X-34 are proving we can reduce the cost of space launches several fold, making space a place where the ordinary citizen may buy a ticket and experience the adventure of space travel. We have developed a space station capability to test hardware in space and to conduct micro-gravity research that will reveal new secrets of material science and biochemistry. Even the old bureaucracy of NASA has been reformed and revitalized under the inspired leadership of NASA Administrator Dan Goldin, becoming a model of efficiency for other government agencies. On the surface our future in space looks bright with a never-ending flow of new technology and the wealth new technology always creates flowing to our society and families.

Unfortunately, the reward for NASA's cost savings and increased productivity has been further budget cuts. When the nation's economy is in decline politicians cut NASA's budget and when the economy is booming politicians cut NASA's budget. It doesn't seem to make a difference which political party is in charge, either; there are pro-space democrats like Barbara Mikulski and pro-space republicans like William Gilcrest, but there are not enough to hold the line. Space is the orphan in Washington with only the National Space Society family and our friends in the Planetary Society speaking for civilian space efforts. Pro-space organizations number their members in the tens-thousands of individual citizens even as every other advocacy group numbers themselves in the hundreds of thousands and enjoy corporate sponsors with deep pockets. Those of us who believe in the future of Humankind in Space do the best we can to preserve governmental NASA research for its vast contribution to our tech base, but

know the government won't in the end, by itself, open the frontier for us. NASA is critical for us at this time, yet the frontier will be fully opened by commercial projects that lower the cost of going to orbit as a paid service for communication satellites, earth observation satellites, re-supply of research efforts on the space station, and space tourism.

Recent developments like the NASA funded Fastrac reusable rocket motor make the private development of launch vehicles practical. Using off the shelf technology the Fastrac is a reusable liquid oxygen-kerosene burning engine with an expendable central core as blast chamber. After each use the central core is unbolted and removed, a new core is inserted and bolted in, the fluids are topped off, and the engine is ready to blast off again. The central core is relatively cheap and the entire engine costs between \$300,000.00—\$1,000,000.00 depending on how many we mass-produce. Compare that to a six million dollar space shuttle main engine and the savings are obvious. The Fastrac is even cheaper to maintain given it's industrial design philosophy. The Fastrac will be flight tested on the X-34 program later this year, has been chosen for the privately funded Roton, and will most likely be used for the liquid fly-back booster to replace the solid rocket boosters on the space shuttle.

Parts made of lightweight composite materials improve the performance of launch systems making single-stage-to-orbit launchers possible, yet they have always been very costly to manufacture and repair. A new process using electron-beam curing reduces the time required to fabricate composite-graphite components from days to hours, and makes on site repair possible without removing the part from the aircraft. Building or repairing a spacecraft with this new technology should be one-sixth as expensive as the older method keeping these vehicles flying to meet demanding schedules. The material science needed to build this type of reliable, cost effective spacecraft for expanded commercial and scientific research has reached the point where private companies can afford to try out their own launch designs, creating competition to build the best spacecraft.

The strangest looking and most original of these new launch systems is the Roton. Using a composite-graphite hull and multiple Fastrac

engines the Roton launches into low earth orbit, drops its cargo as fast as possible and then is flown back into the atmosphere by the pilot. The Roton then deploys reusable rotor blades that slow the craft down, and just before landing, small rockets in the tip of each blade fire, turning the Roton into a powered helicopter for touchdown. The sight of rotor blades on top of a rocket tends to boggle the mind the first time you see it, but there is no technical reason it won't work and tests with models have been very successful. The Rotary Rocket Company has built a full scale Roton test vehicle and, at this writing, has successfully conducted the first short hop flight tests; they are flying it around as a helicopter before mounting the main engines as proof it can land effectively. Roton already has a billion dollars in launch contracts, dependant on a proving test flight, demonstrating that a market exists for inexpensive access to space.

So, if we can keep NASA in the research and development business with continued space exploration as a vital part of their mission, and the commercial companies develop low cost launch systems leading to an opening of the frontier, then the opportunity for many of us to live and work in space will become a reality as the space-based economy makes our nation both richer and more secure. If, on the other hand, the political forces shut down NASA, as they have effectively voted to do recently, then the demand for space launch services will go down. Research increasing the space tech base will disappear, and we will miss another opportunity in space just like we did at the end of the Apollo program. Sooner or latter a civilization on earth will move into space; the question is—do you want it to be ours now? If you do, then write your representatives in Congress. Tell your friends and neighbors you feel this way. Join a pro-space organization like the National Space Society. Stand for the future you want.

More information about the National Space Society can be found on the web at: [www.nss.org](http://www.nss.org). For excellent space and science education links check out: [www.bsfs.org/bsfsscfn.htm](http://www.bsfs.org/bsfsscfn.htm).

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