

# the Star Blazers Fandom Report®

Reporting on the who, what, where, when, why & how of Star Blazers

Issue 15, Number 3 of Volume 4

A publication of the Star Blazers Fan Club

## WORLDCON 1984 L'Acon II in Review

Worldcon 1984, held at the Anaheim Convention Center and Anaheim Hilton, was a veritable haven for the Japanese animation fan. Not only was there an unsurprisingly well organized video room, but there were also opportunities to join in discussions of anime and science fiction in Japan with top professionals and fans from Japan as well as the chance to see a major anime film in 35 mm.

The video room screened the usual variety of popular programs; Orguss, Cat's Eye, Yamato, Galaxy Express 999, etc., and lest we forget, the first episode of the English Tekkaman..... The main attraction in the video room was the premiere of Beoby Trap, volume one of a series of 8 volumes of Super Dimensional Fortress Macross. Retitled Space Fortress Macross (or as the characters say Mac Ross, the giant Scottish Robot!), the entire series will be released by Harmony Gold on commercial video (see Starleg ad) in its "adult" form before the series is reverted for syndication with the preteen dialogue we all cherish (golly gee - they just destroyed one of them Robot Valkyries! lucky there was no one inside...). Carl Masek the producer of the Macross project revealed that Southern Cross and Mospeda will undergo the same treatment, eventually forming a trilogy (a la Voltron and Force Five ?!?).

The first anime related panel was held on Friday morning - the open meeting of the Star Blazers Fan Club. Chaired by Patricia Malone, the informal gathering was, of course, a rare opportunity for club members to meet other members from alternate parts of the country and state their opinions concerning their beloved series.

A slide show presentation, "SF in Japan" was held Friday afternoon with Takumi Shibane, a leading translator of English SF into Japanese. The very different, albeit unusual, activities of Japan's regional and national conventions were spotlighted as well as slides of a pro award ceremony.

The Cartoon/Fantasy Organization's open meeting held Saturday morning, had more of a business like air compared to the Star Blazers Fan Club's meeting. Due to illness, Ann Nichols (President of the national C/FO) was not in attendance, never the less the panel did include such notables as Fred Patten and Barb Edwards. The major topic of discussion was the new general membership fee which was increased to \$15 from \$10 in order to deliver the C/FO's sine first class.

Doubtless, the big event of Worldcon was the screening of Kodansha's new feature based on E.E. "Doc" Smith's literary series, Lensman.

The screening was attended not only by anime fans. Those who did not know otherwise were surprised to realize that it was a 'cartoon'. The feature contained some very impressive computer animation (which was done in the United States) as well as typical animation techniques. While most of the "Doc" Smith fans smirked at the off base adaptation, they still cheered on the heroes and villains when they appeared. All in all, this 35mm subtitled premiere was well received.

L'Acon II was topped off on Monday with the Animation World of Yoshinuki Tomino. Mr. Tomino began his career working on the original Astro Bey series and has since moved on to become a major producer for Nippon Sunrise. He has created some of their best known productions, Mobile Suit Gundam, Space Runaway Ideon, Combat Meka Kabungie, and Aura Battler Dunbine. His presentation included trailers from Gundam III, Ideon, and episode one of Dunbine with sub-titles, all in 16mm. The translator for Mr. Tomino was Frederick Schodt, author of "Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics."

During the question answer period, Mr. Tomino was asked by Dr. Bill Wilson if he could give his own beliefs as to why anime characters lack Oriental appearances. The answer proved amusing to the Japanese in the audience. The reason says Mr. Tomino is because Japanese do not like to look at Japanese faces! They prefer Western appearances to their own... Confronted about the possibility of a Worldcon in Japan, Mr. Tomino feels that the possibility is not very likely. If a Worldcon was held in Japan it would have to be held in the Japanese style. The differences in cultures and customs as well as the language barrier would make a "Yamatocon" more of a trial than anything else.

Mr. Tomino also revealed that he is beginning work on a new series entitled "Zeta Gundam." Worldcon attendees were first to learn of this, even the Japanese fans there were unaware.

Other things of interest included Books Nippon, Pony Toy Co Around and Bud Plant's tables in the cavernous dealers room. The Gamilon Embassy which had copies of Mausica and Chejin Locke was also of interest. There was also fan day at Disneyland as well as group tours through LA. L'Acon II was worth the trip to LA for sure. Those who couldn't attend really missed out on one grand event!

by Stephen Boyd

# star blazers the computer connection

by Mike Higgins

A Star Blazers fan sits down in front of his/her computer terminal, switches on a modem, dials a number and is swiftly in touch with similar fans both of this nation and abroad.

On the screen appears on-line versions of the Star Blazers Fandom Report, news of upcoming conventions and updates on the airing of Star Blazers and similar Japanese animation epics, nation wide.

Meeting notices, informative articles and details of letter writing campaigns all are a keystroke away. Star Blazers fandom enters a new electronic age.

Of course we will have to wait years till any of this can be done, right? Wrong, all the things mentioned above will be available through the NET\*WITS Special Interest Group on the Compuserve Database. Available of course, through the use of a computer and a modem along with telecommunications software and a membership on the Compuserve Network. This would take place after we the fans, put it on the board.

Compuserve is a national service that allows computerists of all levels to communicate with each other and share and exchange information.

NET\*WITS is a science fiction oriented "club" that is a part of the Compuserve Network. Other networks are the Commodore Information Network, Compustore (an on-line shopping service), the Game-Sig (special interest group) and many others.

Compuserve is open to all computer users who have a modem and communications program. There is a charge for belonging but many modems come with a free membership as part of the kit. The basic fee for usage is \$6 per hour (after 6 PM and before 6 AM) but with practice you can get on and off within 10 minutes.

NET\*WITS is a "forum" on the Compuserve Network accessed by typing in "GO WIT-10" after logging on the service. It has just reorganized itself to deal extensively with science fiction and maintains "on-line" clubs dealing with the long-lived British SF series Dr. Who as well as more typical sections dealing with Star Trek. They have listed various fan conventions and so forth and are willing to do more.

They are willing to provide space on their boards for Star Blazers and Japanese Animation subjects and, if response is great enough, it will be possible to set up a specific Star-Blazers board on their setup.

If you have a computer with a modem please get in touch with me and lend a hand. If not take a look into buying one. The potential exists for rapid spread of accurate information nationwide and even perhaps to Japan itself! Star Blazers and Japanese Animation fans owe it to themselves to make use of this new opportunity.

Don't wait to be contacted. If you can help, please get in touch with us know. I can be reached by phone at [redacted] My address is Mike Higgins,

If you are with Compuserve my E-Mail I.D. is [redacted] Articles, ideas and help with the work is needed.



Shown above is an example of art done on a computer. One can do art and graphics on a number of computers. These pictures could be transmitted through NET\*WITS. The above picture was drawn on a computer and then using Zoom Grafix, was printed up. The headline for this article was also done on a computer, as was the apple logo to the left.

# correction

Highly Animated #2 will not be out for Philco as we reported in the last issue. Apologies to the editors. For information send a self addressed stamped envelope to Highly Animated,

# Editorial

I would like to take this chance to thank the members of this club who wrote in about last issues editorial about changing the path of the club. The majority of letters seem to sum up the idea that club should expand into other shows, but we should have coverage of Star Blazers and Yamate. The Star Blazers Fandom Report will expand it's coverage of other shows, while sticking to our roots at the same time. With the issue after next we will change "Reporting on the who, what, where, when, why & how of Star Blazers" to "the newsletter of science fiction animation."

One topic that has struck me is the economics of fandom. The one thing that hit me while reading the letters was the difference in outlook between people who owned video tape machines and those who did not.

It seems that money can make all the difference in fandom. If you have the money you can get a video tape machine, buy tapes, and other neat things. It also seems that it can make a huge difference in how one can even get friends, or end friendships.

One thing that interests me is the very wide gap between fans. I know some fans who are lucky if they can afford one Roman album, while I have seen other fans buy Roman Album 57, just to fill up the gap between 56 and 58.

There are these fans, who vow that money will not get in the way. They skip lunch to buy an anime comic, and save their pennies so that one day they too can afford a video machine.

Fandom can be so expensive at times, with so many neat, but very expensive toys out there. Even the small things can add up fast. My favorite example is the English Star Blazers Anime Comics. If you buy all three at \$10, you can go through \$30!!!! This may not be much to some people, but to others \$30 is nothing to sneeze at. Of course the sum of \$30 is small when you keep in mind how much a pre-recorded tape of a Yamate movie is.

There is also a different type of economics as well - the economics of how much time a person has, and how this time is spent. For example, for all the time I spent on this fanzine I had to miss out on a convention.

There are some ways around this if you aren't rich. For example instead of buying color anime comics, you can buy

the cheaper black and white mangas. And if you can afford a video tape machine, there are cheaper ways of getting video tapes than pre-recorded copies (I would write more but this is method is in the "gray" area of the law).

Anyway I would like to hear what other fans have to say on the subject. I would like to hear any suggestions about how to make an expensive habit like fandom cheaper. In the area of collecting, some places are cheaper than others for example. It would be interesting to see how others view the economics of fandom. I would also like to hear what people think about those who share their resources (re- if they can afford a video machine, but take it to conventions and show things to other fans), and those who don't.

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Staff - Michael Pinte (Editor & Art Director), Brian Cirulnick, Aaron Reed, Stephen Boyd, Frank Strem and Mike Higgins.

STAR BLAZERS ROCKVILLE (Maryland)  
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STAR BLAZERS TAMPA BASE  
Adriana Brown,

STAR BLAZERS NORTHERN VIRGINIA  
John Dorsey,

BOSTON JAPANIMATION CLUB  
Caren Perlmutter,

## Ads & More

Ads in this section are free to all members of this club. For larger ads please write the club. Please send all ads to - The Star Blazers Fan Club, Ads & More,

We reserve the right to reject ads on an editorial basis.

WANTED - VHS tapes of the first or second season of Star Blazers. Will pay reasonable price. Jeff D. Stoner,

Would a club member please copy the issue of the Star Blazers Fandom Report that contained the article on MY YOUTH IN ARCADIA for me. Denise League,

WANTED - Japanimation video on VHS... Queen Millennia film with subtitles, Cyborg 009/Galaxy Express TV subtitled episodes (or dubbed film) will buy or send blanks for copy. Contact - SA Robert Morganbesser,

# Fan Activity

## by Brian Cirulnick

Editor's note - this article is continued from "Star Blazers - Roll Your Own" from two issues ago.

### PART III: Film Animation

Although there is still some dispute as to who created the first animated cartoon, most research points to James Stewart Blackton who made the animation he called "The Enchanted Drawing" in 1900. This USA effort was immediately followed by Emile Cohl in France with his first animation "Mr. Stop". Both films were extremely crude experiments with "jerky" motion. Blackton went on to do "The Humorous Phases of Funny Faces" in 1906, while Cohl gave us the first animated series called "Phantasmagorie" and the first character star named "Fantouche".

Fantouche was a stick figure drawn onto a blackboard. Cohl would draw him, click off a few frames of film, erase the board, and then draw Fantouche in another position. Phantasmagorie was a series of films in which a series of shapes would shift, change and blend. Again, both films were simple, experimental, poor quality animations which were made to attract people to the animation media, as compared to "live-action" films. Cohl became a cartoonist for a Paris weekly paper. Later, he moved to New York and did nothing more. Meanwhile, Blackton became one of the founders of the Vitagraph Film Company, which openly challenged Edison's monopoly on film production. Later, he and his partners sold Vitagraph to Warner Brothers Studios and Blackton disappeared behind the scenes and was soon lost in Warner Brother's waves of bankruptcy and success.

Famed animator Winsor McCay entered the animation field in 1911 with a film called "Little Nemo" based upon his popular newspaper strip of the same name. McCay introduced the first fluid animation, much smoother than Blackton's or Cohl's work. McCay drew on translucent rice paper, using crude cross marks as reference from one drawing to the next. Despite the lack of sophisticated equipment, his work has amazingly smooth movement.

John A. Fitzsimmons, who worked with McCay, developed the first "real" registration system for the drawings, that became the forerunner of the peg registration system of today. McCay also became the first to repeat drawings in a sequence, as in the case of a man walking. The same drawing can be used over and over, to give the illusion of a long walk from only a few drawings. This process saves the animation time, effort and money. He used this technique in his second film "How a Mesquite Operates" and later in his highly successful and well known film "Gertie, The Trained Dinosaur".

### PART IV: Advanced Animation

If you can get your hands on an old super-8 or 8mm camera, you can do your own film animation. Don't panic yet, there is still alot of work before you start to film. First you need an animation board. This usually consists of a simple lightbox set at a slight angle and therefore can be placed on any table or flat surface. The dimensions shown on my diagram are approximate, the box can be any size, supporting any size piece of glass or plastic, as long as the

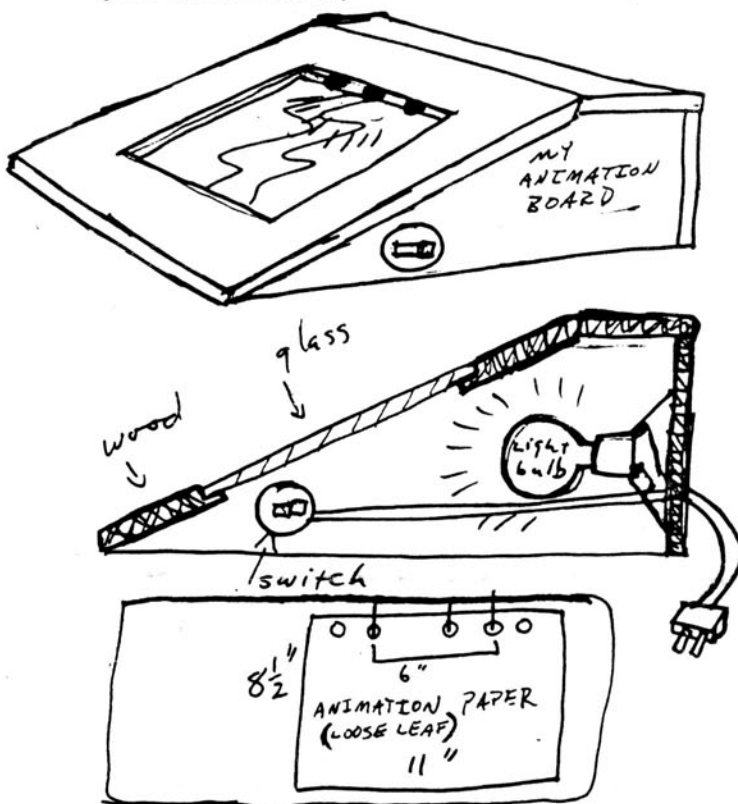
dimensions allow adequate space for the lightbulb and paper. The only area where size is critical is the peg system.

I checked my local drugstore, they carry ruled as well as unruled 8 1/2" by 11" loose leaf paper. I chose this type of paper as it is a fairly accurate, cheap form of pre-punched paper. A normal pencil, when cut, makes pretty good pegs.

I measured the two inner holes at six inches apart (15 1/4 cm) with the center hole resting at the three and one thirty second mark (about 7 and 3/4's). Don't worry if there are slight inaccuracies, even the best systems allow a little room or you wouldn't be able to get the paper off the pegs!

Cut the pencil into two or three pegs, each no taller than half an inch and glue the pegs to the glass (crazy glue or some other similar super glue is great for this job) using the pencil lead as the basis for determining the center of the peg. You can use a piece of your animation paper as a guide for the placement of pegs.

I leave the rest of the construction up to your discretion. Remember, if you have come up with any improvements to the system, don't hesitate to write into the SBFR with your suggestion. I need all the help I can get to continue this series of articles on how to do your own animations.



With the lightbox in operation, you will be able to see through several sheets of paper, and note how your series of drawings vary in position. Try one drawing with a stick figure with his arms in the air. Place another sheet of paper over the first and draw over the stick figure, this time having his arms at his sides. Now do three "inbetweens" so that in all you will have five drawings, each one slightly different than the other. Now flip the drawings and you will see the stick figure's arms fall.

Next time I'll continue with advanced animation, included will be how to time, rough out and film animation.

# Urusei Yatsura

## うる星やつら

by Aaron Reed

October 14th, 1981 saw the dawning of an animated television series whose impact on anime fans in Japan and North America was no doubt unforeseen by most except for the producers at Kitty Films, who chose to bring it to the screen. For on the evening of that date, at 7:30 PM, the Fuji Telebi Network unveiled to the viewing public Urusei Yatsura, which more or less means 'Those Annoying Aliens' in English.

That first episode began without a hint of what bizarre things were yet to happen, as we watch teenager Ataru Moroboshi walk past a ballgame, but yet his eyes are focused on other things namely, beautiful women! So Ataru fails to notice other things, like a baseball that hits him.....

If that's bad enough, matters start worsening with the appearance of Cherry, a Buddhist monk, who tells Moroboshi his ways are evil, and the sudden arrival of thugs in an ominous black sedan, with the protection of the military, transport Ataru to an undisclosed location.

That undisclosed location turns out to be his own home, where thousands of soldiers have the place surrounded! Then Ataru's parents, along with girlfriend Shinobu, lead him into the living room to meet the reason: a fat giant who, just sitting down is about 2½ meters tall!

The giant whose name is never mentioned, explains his reason for being there, telling Ataru their computers selected him to compete against one of theirs in a contest of some sort.

While that's going on, a tiger-striped starship, whose size makes the Yamato look like a row boat, descends to hover over the Moroboshi home, discharging a passenger in a bolt of lightning to the living room to join the others. The new arrival, possessing the form of a female, turns out to be the giants daughter, named, Lum.

LUM

Illustration by Frank Strom



# うる星やつら continued

Lum's father then explains to Ataru that she is his opponent, and that in ten day's time he must grab her horns in order to win. With everyone telling Ataru that his losing would mean invasion, our hero, feeling there's no other alternative, agrees to the contest.

Right from the first day, Ataru learns that catching Lum by the horns is easier said than done, as Lum demonstrates her flying ability! To catch Lum on her own turf, Ataru tries pole vaulting, only to miss his opponent by a couple of inches and sends him crashing to the ground. The next day finds him having taken lessons from Wile E. Coyote, with a Buck Rogers-style jetpack that backfires.

Poor Ataru, with one day left in the race, and all of terra on his case! Will he lose as the people fear? No way! Thanks to a pop gun he uses to snatch Lum's brassiere! Yes! And while the space girl rushed to get it back, Ataru grabs her by the horns. Victory is his.....

However, our hero is not happy. It seems as he fired the gun, he blurted out some nonsense of marrying Lum if he won. Now Lum expects him to keep his word. And to make sure he does, she gives him a shocking experience! Unfortunately Ataru's unable to explain all this to his girl-

friend Shinobu, who then becomes his ex-girl-friend almost immediately! "Poor thing," as Lum calls Ataru at the end, and which he's been for almost three years on TV.

But before the program's successful television run came to be, Urusei Yatsura had been running, and still is, in the pages of the manga weekly Shonen Sunday, where it began in late September of 1978. For almost six years, Rumiko Takahashi, has been illustrating the exploits of Lum and her friends, with no apparent signs of stopping now. As is the case with many anime series of manga origin, there are differences between the original manga and the anime versions, and the first episode is a case point.

The first major noteworthy difference is in how the story opens, which is a little dramatic in the manga version. In the first panel, we get to witness Shinobu slap Ataru on the face, shouting "I HATE YOU", and then running off.

*Mendo  
& Shinobu*



Ataru then calls out to her to come back, and she replies, "I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!"

Then as in the anime, Cherry arrives on the scene, following which Ataru heads for home, without the help of thugs, and has his little conversation with Lum's dad.

After that an important fact is revealed in conversation between Cherry and Ataru's parents, that the date on which our hero was born was...  
.....FRIDAY THE 13th! That realization leaves the Moroboshis feeling it's Ataru's destiny, or Karma, to participate in the contest.

As for differences between the manga and the series in total, the most important difference is that the series has more time in a typical 30 minute episode to tell a story than does a manga story, which usually runs 16 pages. If a manga story's going to run longer, then it will run as a two or three parter. However, such multipart stories only run an episode on TV. Due to this, there is room to expand on the plot and make many situations even zanier, to the point of being totally outrageous. Second in importance is that in stories revolving around the school, a certain group of classmates exists in the anime version to pick on Ataru, who don't exist at all

in the manga. Well they did in the earliest manga stories, but were dropped some time in '79.

Otherwise, the anime version is quite faithful to the manga as to how the regular and semi-regular characters are portrayed. Here is a listing of the characters in the series:

**LUM** - Alien girl who is infatuated over Ataru. She has the ability to fly and emit powerful electric shocks.

**ATARU MOROBOSHI** - A girl chaser, to whom most of his chases often end in electric shocks, whacks to the head, and other physical injuries.

**SAKURA** - A nurse at Lum and Ataru's school, who's also a miko (moo-koh, a Shinto priestess) and a fairly good friend of the two.

**CHERRY** - Sakura's uncle. A Buddhist priest who has a reputation for causing mischief.

**SHINOBU** - Ataru's ex-girlfriend. Possesses superhuman strength. Her inner most desire is to have Ataru back again.

**SHUTARO MEMDO** - Classmate of Ataru's who comes from a noble family. Currently Shinebu's boyfriend.

**RYUNOSUKE FUJIMAMI** - A girl raised up by her father to be a boy, but who desires to be a woman in earnest.

**KURAMA** - A half-Terran, half alien princess, whose ongoing quest is to find the perfect lover, with whom she can have babies to perpetuate her race.

**LAM** (sometimes **RAM**) - Lum's childhood playmate, and a constant source of irritation to Lum. A true airhead on many occasions.

**LEI** - Lum's former boyfriend. Between girls and feed, he'll take the feed over girls any day (and every day).

**BENTEN** - Her name means 'flying sky' but her image doesn't match her name. She's a hell raiser who's quite good with weapons, be it her set chain, a phaser, or a bazooka!

So far, this annoying, yet loveable cast of characters has appeared in 21 manga, and 25 anime volumes, in addition to over 130 TV episodes, and two motion pictures. The two movies are as follows:



**ONLY YOU** - (released Feb. 11, 1983) In this film, Ataru is whisked off to a distant planet to be enclosed in a giant rose, to marry Elle, a girl Ataru played with one day on Earth 11 years ago. In the game, Ataru tried stepping on Elle's shadow. Doing so, according to some old folk tale, would mean he would have to marry her! The fun starts when Elle comes back to Earth to claim Ataru.

**BEAUTIFUL DREAMER** - (released Feb. 11, 1984) In this movie a little guy called Dream Maker creates havoc for everybody. Though he does create a harem of beautiful girls for Ataru. He also causes a serious disaster that levels Tokyo, turns Shinebu into a statue, and causes Lum to become immaterial, with the danger of fading away for good. With this it is up to Sakura to save the day.

If you are tired of the usual rut of super-robots, I recommend you give Urusei Yatsura a try. If you would like to join the Urusei Yatsura Fan Club, you can send your letters (40¢ air mail) to: The Urusei Yatsura Fan Club, 1 - 8 - 6 Yoyogi, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 151 Japan. Since English is known and spoken by a lot of Japanese your letters, with any luck will be understood.

# THE END

# communications

Letters to the editor are welcomed from the entire human race. Please send your ideas, opinions and propositions to - the Star Blazers Fan Club,

Editor's note - there have been a batch of letters dealing with the front page editorial in the last issue, which raised the idea of expanding the clubs interests.

In response to your last editorial, I must say that (in my opinion) expansion is the only route profitable. By profitable I don't mean monetarily, but profitable in a growing knowledge. I think the Space Cruiser Yamato theme the club chose was only an ice-breaker for the Japanese animation genre. Though I grew up with Speed Racer and Astro Boy, I've never really seen or heard about animated space operas such as Yamato, Technoboyagers, Captain Harlock and a host of others before I became a member. All of which I don't think I could of heard or read about if I didn't, ...with the widening American Market for Japanese animation it would be senseless not to write and report on the genre this club is based on.

Now I hope you don't think that I want to see Space Cruiser Yamato fade from the Space Cruiser Yamato Fan Club, and its title used only in a token fashion for other animated science fiction...NO, NO, NO,....I believe there'll be plenty of Yamato for some time to write and report about. With the practically assured airing of the third season in '85, and if and when there is enough popular demand we're sure to see another Yamato movie. (Example): They killed off Godzilla about nine years ago, and because of popular demand he's coming back in mid 1985. Proving that anything can comeback with enough popular demand, which of course was and still is the founding theme of this club.

Edward A. Hawkins

...I say that you should change the name to the JAPANIMATION FANDOM REPORT, and run with it from there. Don't be afraid of being a general JA club, the C/FO is not the only game in town, and they do not own the sole rights to JA fandom in this nation. The two clubs are both very different, and I can't see either becoming an imitation of the other...

Frank Strom

First I would like to say that I have not been a member that long and don't see very much at all of Star Blazers in your reports, so in answer to your question, I would like to hear more about Star Blazers. My boyfriend has been in a couple of years longer than me and he said that I have missed alot about Avatar and the

others. We can have other things in the report, but I'm just saying that I'd still like to see alot of Star Blazers. I also like the flip book, bookmark, and the sticker. Thank you.

Tracy Lee Evans

Yes I for one wish to throw my support for change. You can't hang on to a "solely" Star Blazers theme organization. You can grow, nay, you must grow. Now seems to be the right time. Japanese animation has evolved into a fine medium. No I am not implying that, categorically Japanese animation is going to be the next thing. What I am trying to say is that if, as you said in your editorial, you go out and cover other series besides Star Blazers and still at the same time keep reporting the goings-on in the Star Blazers universe, then I feel, you have insured a healthy life.

Ed Vitale

...What is wrong with the Cartoon/Fantasy Organization that you don't want to be like? I attend meetings regularly, and I am curious to know what the problem is....

Andrew Morrison

-- Nothing is wrong at all with the Cartoon/Fantasy Organization. In fact on the whole I rather like the group, they put out a great fansine and in New York City they held meetings that can get up to 60 people. The point I was making was that if we wanted to imitate the C/FO, why bother when we can join it any way?

- the editor

I haven't had a chance to read the last couple issues yet, so this is based on only #14. Include classified ads, etc.. Too much amateur strip work; I want this for informative articles. Reproductions of Japanese art is fine, but severely limit stuff like what appeared in this issue.

Dad Plant

Your newsletter is getting better. I loved the Desslok Story.

Ann Nichols

...Need I add that the art in the last fandom report (#14) was priceless?!

Jeanette M. Eilke  
Atlantic Block, CFB Halifax