

## Now Introducing...BALLYHOO!

You always wanted to join the circus, didn't you? Heck, we all did. The only question was whether to put on clown makeup, walk the highwire, or brave the wild beasts. Now you get to do *all* these things, in Infocom's new puzzle-packed mystery, *Ballyhoo*™.

*Ballyhoo* sets you down outside the big top at the end of the show. As the last circus-goers filter out the gate, you decide to stick around. Maybe you'll get to see an impromptu clown act, or watch the late-night feedings of the exotic animals, or peek at the gadgets and glitter inside the prop tent. Maybe you'll even get to meet that gorgeous trapeze artist or those high-wire hunks!

But no such luck. Instead you're plunged into a mysterious underworld where everyone has a secret to keep — and no one wants to clue you in. Exploring the seedy corners of the lot, you overhear a conversation about the owner's young daughter. She's been kidnapped, and the hired gumshoe finds his bottle more engaging than the case.

It looks like you've got two choices: forget about the tot, or set off on a search of your own. Naturally, you go for the role of hero.

As the night progresses, you realize that the life of a hero, like the back yard of the big top, is about as

glamorous as a tarnished piece of costume jewelry. Rather than applauding your efforts to find the child, the circus folk see you as an outsider messing about in their very private business. You find yourself getting a quick lesson in the daring stunts you admired from afar, as you seek clues and dodge danger.

To get you ready for the big time, the *Ballyhoo* package includes a colorful circus program, a balloon, a trade card for Dr. Nostrum's Herbified Extract, and your ticket to Spangleland. The program introduces you to the unique characters you'll meet in the story and gives you a glimpse of life in the back lot.

In *Ballyhoo*, you'll need to solve puzzles in order to solve the crime. As a standard-level game, it's a great introduction to our mystery line. And when you leave the circus, keep honing your investigative skills with our other popular whodunits — *Dead-line*®, *The Witness*®, and *Suspect*™.

*Ballyhoo* was written by Jeff O'Neill, who fulfilled the promise of the American dream by rising from game tester to game designer at Infocom. *Ballyhoo* joins a distinctive list of great "first works" of interactive fiction, including *Zork*® I (by Marc Blank and Dave Lebling), *Suspended*® (by Michael Berlyn), *Planetfall*® (by Steve Meretzky), *The Witness* (by Stu Galley), and *Wish-bringer*™ (by Brian Moriarty). **Z**



Included in this and every *Ballyhoo* package are your *Ballyhoo* disk, your ticket to the circus, a program to *The Travelling Circus That Time Forgot, Inc.*, a trade card for Dr. Nostrum's Herbified Extract, and a bright red balloon.

### An Heirloom to Cherish — Yours From Infocom!

Imagine the thrill of owning an authentic numbered, autographed copy of Infocom's latest interactive mystery, *Ballyhoo*! Imagine the envy of your friends and neighbors when you proudly display this rare edition! And imagine the tears of gratitude when you pass this valuable heirloom on to your children fifty years hence!

Unbelievable as it seems, this wonderful opportunity can be yours! A limited edition of *Ballyhoo* signed and numbered by author Jeff O'Neill is now available exclusively through *The New York Times*. These are the very first copies to roll off the production lines! Only 150 per

version are available for your IBM, Apple, or Commodore. And only 75 per version are available for your Atari, Atari ST, Amiga, or Macintosh.

We're sure you'd pay plenty for an heirloom item of this caliber. But even more unbelievably, this special edition is available at the regular price of only \$39.95! To order, simply call our toll-free number (800-262-6868). But hurry! This is a first-come-first-served offer!

Don't miss the chance to own a copy of the very first Infocom limited edition! Amaze your friends! Satisfy your desire for the best! Order today! **Z**

### Fooblitzky Keeps Puzzle-Solvers Busy

Most of you interactive fiction fans love the puzzles in Infocom's games. But many of you may not realize that puzzle-solving is also an important part of Infocom's first graphics strategy game, *Fooblitzky*™. Here is a *Fooblitzky*-like logic puzzle; see if you can figure it out.

Imagine a town where stores sell only 12 items, and where the currency is "foobles." Now suppose a contest is held in the town, and 4 of the items are secretly designated "right items." Your goal is to figure out what the 4 right items are.

To help you out, city officials tell you the *cost* (in foobles) of the 4

right items. And every time you bring items to City Hall, you'll be told *how many* of the items you have are right. However, you won't be told *which* items are right. Given the following information, can you tell which are the 4 right items?

Items costing 4 foobles: banana, fish, hair spray, and screwdriver

Items costing 8 foobles: light bulb, sardines, snake, and toothpaste

Items costing 16 foobles: eyedropper, hot dog, pig, and saw

Suppose you're told that one of the right items costs 4 foobles, one costs 8 foobles, and two cost 16 foobles. Assume that the two 16-fooble items

are different.

1. Player 1 goes to City Hall with a banana, a snake, an eyedropper, and a pig, and learns that she's carrying 2 right items.

2. Player 2 goes to City Hall with a banana, a light bulb, and a snake, and learns that he too is carrying 2 right items.

3. Player 3 goes to City Hall with

sardines, a hot dog, a pig, and a saw, and learns that he is carrying 1 right item.

4. Player 4 goes to City Hall with hair spray, toothpaste, and a saw, and learns that she's carrying 1 right item.

With this information, you should be able to deduce what the 4 right  
*(continued on page 5)*

# Humor Liberation Front Disrupts Meeting

Dozens of Humor Liberation Front members and their supporters disrupted the November employee meeting of Infocom Inc. which took place at the company's sprawling CambridgePark facility.

The operation is believed to have been masterminded and carried out by the radically twisted faction of the Humor Liberation Front known as the Dimwit Flathead Brigade. There is also evidence that suggests a shadowy group from the Genetics Institute, an Infocom neighbor and producer of genetically engineered facial cleaners, acted in a support role.

The disruption took place near the beginning of the meeting and involved the use of what Infocom security expert Mike Quinn has called Cloned Entry Operatives, or CEO's. Quinn explained that CEO's were an advanced type of identity transformation device.

In this latest act of mirth, the HLF infiltrated over five dozen of these CEO's into the meeting by disguising them as exact duplicates of Infocom Chief Executive Officer Al Vezza. Once inside the CEO, CEO's instigated an atmosphere of such intense hilarity that the meeting was

quickly adjourned to the company punch bowl. The accompanying photograph was taken just as the real Mr. Vezza was asked to stand.

When questioned about security, an unnamed source said that the only two guards on duty at the time, Infocom General Manager John O'Leary and Product Manager Tom Smaldone, were distracted by a special in-house X-rated version of

*Fooblitzky* that was handed to them just before the meeting. The only other person who might have been alerted to what was about to happen was Lorri Fischer, who was manning the reception desk during the meeting. When questioned, Ms. Fischer said, "I didn't really see anything strange but I did think it was odd when Al asked me 43 times if he could bring me a glass of punch."

The conclusion of experts who have studied this scintillatingly madcap escapade is that it is only the first round in a new offensive offensive. As they said, the inability of Infocom security forces to capture even one of the punsters was sure to inspire an increased bravado and willingness to commit further acts of chicanery. **Z**



## The HLF: Ruthless and Unpredictable

The recent invasion of an Infocom Inc. company meeting by elements of the Humor Liberation Front reminds us once again that we must be ever vigilant in the fight for good clean fun. The picture of this humor-crime, with so many innocent people left in stitches, is a grim reminder of the past excesses of this group.

The Humor Liberation Front was formed out of a ragtag bunch of disgruntled thrill seekers who were working for the playful yet rational software development company, Infocom. In their quest for "fun" was planted the seed of anarchy that has once again shown its ugly face in recent events. This latest attack is no isolated event. We have only to look back a short time to see the pattern:

- **November 1983** — A chill Autumn day is shattered when a series of vile, trumped-up murder charges are leveled at Info-tester Dave Anderson. The infamous Fish Trial ensues. When the smoke clears Anderson is

innocent, and Poh Lim is found guilty and sentenced to life in the Graphics Group. However, most feel that Mr. Lim is just a scapegoat in some shadowy conspiracy. The HLF is born and three goldfish die in the name of fun.

- **December 1983** — In a move to take over and control the hearts and minds of Infocom employees, the HLF publishes the wildly funny but scandalous newspaper *Infodope*. Fun-Think is born. The company laughs as lives are trashed and reputations are dragged through the mud.
- **February 1984** — The HLF now moves to control all social life at Infocom. In a powerful show of farce, the group stages a "model" wedding. Steve Meretzky and Betty Rock, dressed in zany pseudo-religious costumes, are forced into a sham marriage. Never able to cope with the humiliation, the couple finds solace

in each other's company and later weds for real. The HLF seizes on this as proof of the "righteousness of our cause."

- **March 1984** — The HLF stages a "fun" snowball fight. It is actually a cover for a wave of reprisals against the "unfunny."
- **April 1984** — In an effort to control the rising power of the HLF, Infocom forms FunCom. This conservative group starts by taking over the running of the weekly Friday parties. The HLF strikes back by forcing the parties to take on funny but strange themes. One party features babies floating in the punch bowl to commemorate a recent birth. Another party, in honor of Secretaries Week, degenerates into a wild melee of acrobatics after HLF spikes the water cooler.
- **May 1984** — The HLF again strikes at the Infocom communication network by instituting the Memo War. In this ongoing campaign, the HLF sent out dozens of funny memos that neverthe-

less have a basis in truth, thereby causing mass confusion and paranoia.

- **July 1984** — The HLF's next target is education. By staging a goofy graduation ceremony for Infocom CEO Al Vezza, the HLF sends out the message to one and all that outside education is a joke and that the HLF will be the sole arbiters of all learning.
- **August 1985** — After months of inactivity the HLF returns in force with a riotous public rehabilitation of Micro Group supervisor, Dan Horn. In the form of the game show "To Tell The Truth," Horn's idiosyncrasies and individualism are torn apart by a panel of disguised HLF operatives.

These are the facts. The HLF has been responsible for a continuing "fun war," the aim of which is no less than all-out domination of humor. The recent attack on the Infocom meeting is proof positive that the Humor Liberation Front is alive and well and capable of striking at will. **Z**

# Check It Out

Where do you go to learn which products give you the best value for your money? *Consumer Reports*, right? Well, in the November issue, Infocom stories received high marks in a survey of computer games. Ratings were based on the results of a questionnaire asking *Consumer Reports* readers to list the games they played and then evaluate each product's intellectual challenge, ease of learning, sustained interest, and overall satisfaction. Only games mentioned by at least 50 respondents were included in the ratings.

Of the 31 games listed, 11 were "logic-and-fantasy," including *Enchanter*<sup>®</sup>, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*<sup>™</sup>, *Zork I*, *Zork II*, and *Zork III*. *Enchanter* and *Hitchhiker's* obtained particularly good ratings in all four categories. *Consumer Reports* noted that fantasy games in general were considered "far more satisfying" than action games.

*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* continues to provide satisfaction in lots of places. A recent review in *Gentlemen's Quarterly* called it a game "you read instead of bleep." Added *GQ*, "Unlike conventional novels, Infocom's variety lets the reader pave his own path through the prose, creating a unique tale every time."

*Hitchhiker's* was also featured in *Home Computer Magazine*, which "found it to be all the challenge a presumably sound-minded adult would desire. It is an articulate, detailed, and demanding game —

one in which nearly every conceivable avenue of action has been foreseen, and every consequence described in colorful, descriptive prose." And for all you Douglas Adams fans, *Changing Times* noted that "Adam's unique brand of hilarity is obvious in every response and every twist of the ever-twisting plot in this original adventure game."

We've been getting in a lot of good comments on *A Mind Forever Voyaging*<sup>™</sup> from the members of our Infocom Elite Adventurers Society (in case you've forgotten, that's all of you). Reviewers like *AMFV*, too. *Ms. Magazine* called it "one of the season's most intriguing new games." And an editor at *Billboard* wrote to say, "*A Mind Forever Voyaging* is the best game Infocom has produced yet. All I know is that I started it when it was dark and broke off when I noticed it was daylight."

And to start the new year on the right foot (the one that wears the unutterably-schmaltzy-pride-in-our-product shoe), we offer the following quote from a *Wishbringer* review in *A+ Magazine*: "Have you figured out what you'd wish for if you had the chance? I don't even need a moment to consider. I want more Infocom games. When Infocom releases a new game, the question that goes through your minds should not be 'Should I get the game?' but, rather, 'When should I get the game?'. And the answer should always be 'Immediately.'" **Z**

## The New York Times

**Writers** Gary Brennan, Paul Gross, Elizabeth Langosy, Dave Lebling, Steve Meretzky, Jeff O'Neill, Jonathan Palace, Betty Rock, Tom Veldran

**Production** Cynthia Curtis, Jonathan Palace, Betty Rock, Michelle Simpson, Gayle Syska

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# Mail Bag

## Dear Sir:

I am presently a scientist at Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station, Antarctica, having left the United States a month ago. One of the last things I did before I left was to purchase your *Zork I* adventure since I knew there was an IBM-PC down here. So far, I haven't been able to get across the river (mainly because I have been too busy). I have shown it to several co-workers who are also hooked on it!

The last plane leaves for the winter on February 10, and the next one will be November 1, after the Antarctic 9-month winter. Your game will help us through the long hours of darkness and cold (the sun will be gone for 6 months, and it will drop to -110 degrees F)! We as a group have nominated *Zork I* as the unofficial computer game of the South Pole, and we'd like to let you know we appreciate the quality and entertainment of this game!

Sincerely,

Clifford C. Wilson  
FPO San Francisco, CA

## Dear Infocom:

I read the "Yak Facts" in your Spring '85 newsletter with interest, specifically, "A herd of yaks can migrate over seven thousand miles in a single day." Realizing that this was in excess of 290 mph, I immediately sold my car and visited my yak dealer (located in Lima, Peru). The salesperson did make an odd comment about top yak speeds being obtainable only "in high altitude areas," and "terminal velocity may vary." And that the 7,000-mile range required an extra available through United Airlines. No doubt these are just meaningless disclaimers required by the Peruvian EPA.

I hope you continue to keep your "Yak Facts" clean. The yearly yak issues of *Sports Illustrated* are disgraceful.

Somewhat sincerely,

John S. Kalstram

P.S. What's the mgp on an emu?

## To the editor:

The following is an excerpt from a particularly annoying segment of *Yakstalker*, a new interactive adventure by the National Association for the Advancement of Yaks (N.A.A.Y.).

## Precipice

As you clamber onto the precipice, you note a rather large yak regarding you with studied indifference.

>SAY HELLO

Yaks can't talk, but this one acknowledges your presence with a sagacious nod.

>YAK, WHERE IS THE MONK?

The yak smiles enigmatically.

>YAK, YAK

The yak stares back.

>GIVE GOAT CHEESE TO YAK

You can't be serious!

>KILL SELF WITH GOAT CHEESE

You can't go that way.

>JUMP OFF PRECIPICE

As you leave for your final reward, you feel the yak's teeth grab the seat of your pants. Back on solid ground, you watch as the yak's form shifts and blurs, to become -- the monk.

>SAY HELLO

Monks don't talk, but this one acknowledges your presence with a sagacious nod...

Mark Cantrell  
Canal Point, Florida

## To the editor:

*Wilfurd the Hard-Shell Turtle*  
Wilfurd the hard-shelled turtle  
(turtle)

Had a rainbow-colored shell (shell).  
If you had ever EXEX-ed it  
(EXEX-ed it),

You would even say it shimmers  
(like Jello).

All of the other turtles (turtles)  
Used to laugh and call him names  
(like Skittles).

Poor Wilfurd the hard-shelled turtle  
(turtle)

Couldn't join in any turtle games  
(like *Zork*).

Then one foggy enchanted eve,  
Belboz came to say (NITFOL),

"Wilfurd with your shell so hard,  
Won't you get that scroll for me?"

Then all the turtles loved him (loved him).

Then they shouted out with glee (I mean turtle wax),

"Wilfurd the hard-shelled turtle!  
You'll go down in Sor-cer-y (like *Enchanter*)!"

Jun A. Akiyama

Robert Prokop



# Cartoon Editor Inundated

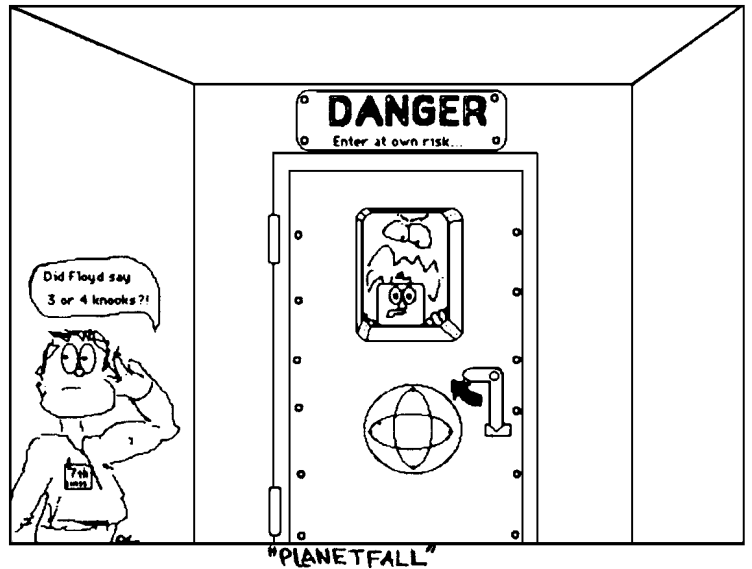
Since we first announced our cartoon contest a year ago (NZT, Winter '85) we have received an increasing barrage of entries — over 400 through early December.

Therefore, we've decided to print this huge spread of cartoons. We'll continue to print more than one per issue as long as we continue to receive such a high volume of good cartoons.

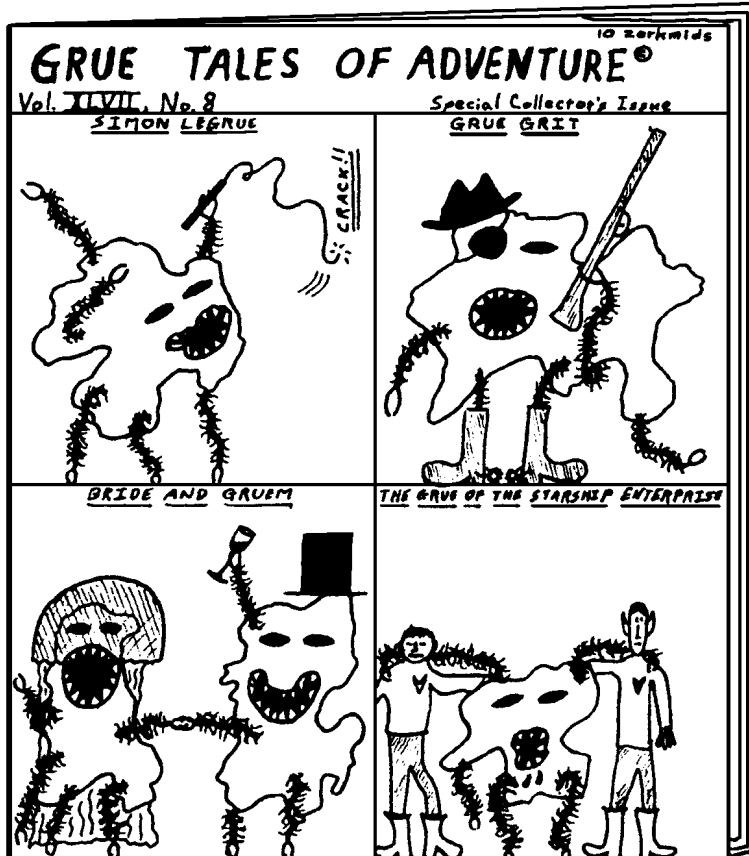
Every cartoonist whose work is printed in *The New York Times* receives a free Infocom game of his

or her choice. If you'd like to try, send us your cartoon in black ink on white, unlined paper. No pencil or colors, and don't fold your cartoon! All submissions become property of Infocom, Inc. Send your entries to NZT Cartoons, Infocom, Inc., 125 CambridgePark Drive, Cambridge, MA 02140. Include a separate sheet of paper with your name and address, as well as the title of the game you'd like to win, and the computer system it should run on. **Z**

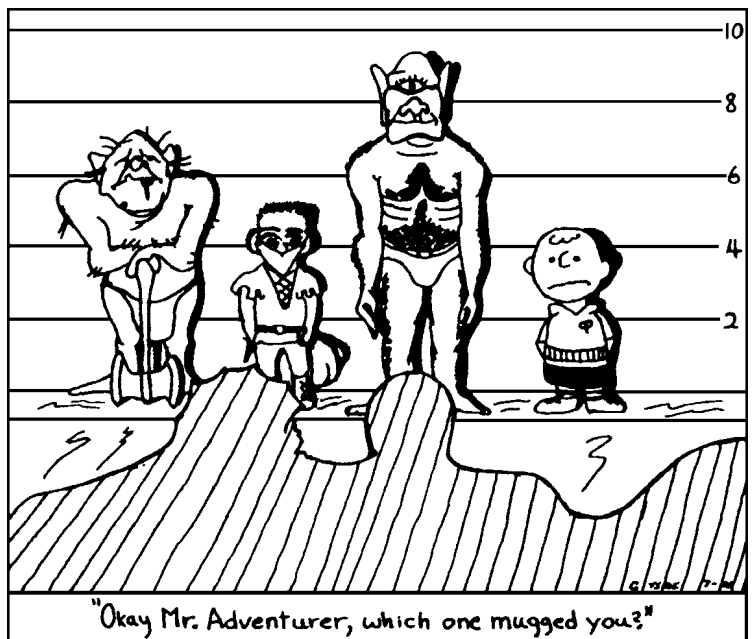
Oscar Chavarria



H. Goodman



George Tsai



Dave Kaplan

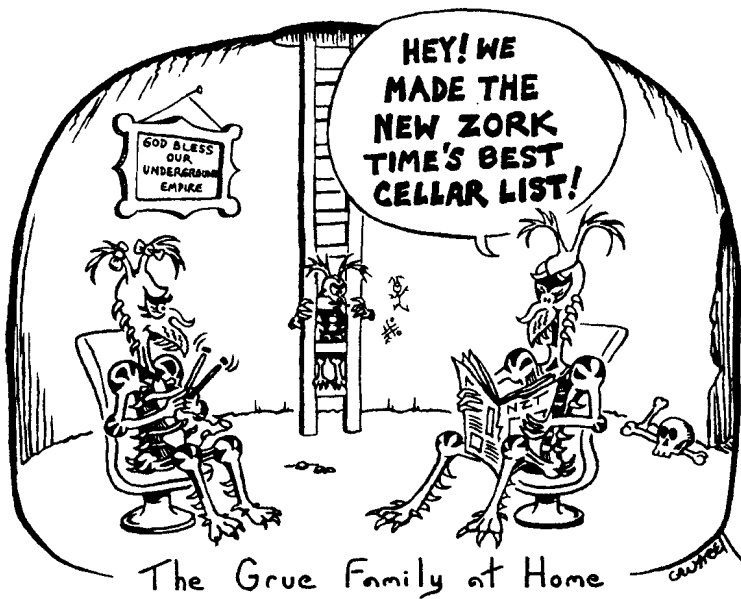


"Yeah, Sarge, we got 'im. Breaking and entering, possession of stolen goods, tampering with the mails, concealing weapons, a sword with blood all over it, and you should see the basement!"

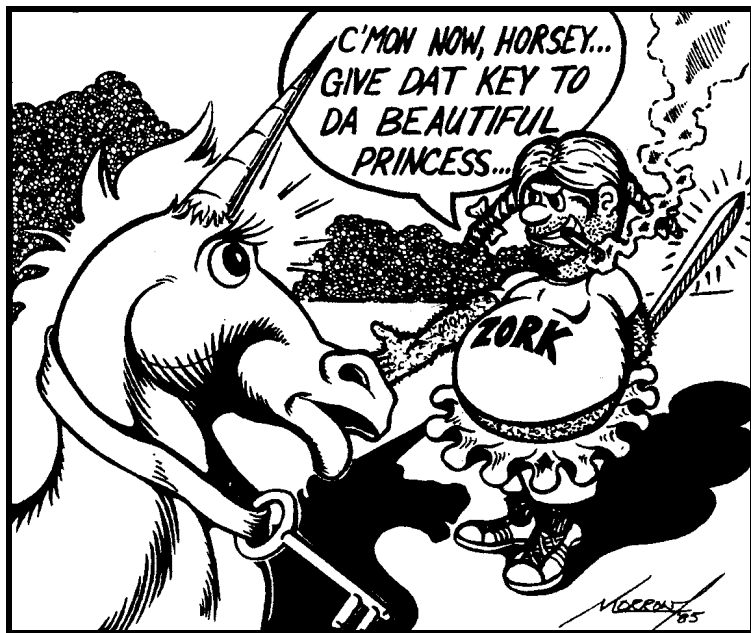
Jeff Martin



Mark Cantrell



John Morrow



Fooblitzky (continued from page 1)

items are. (In a real game of *Fooblitzky*, you *couldn't* assume that the two 16-fooble items are different. Try deducing the 4 right items again, this time allowing the two 16-fooble items to be the same *or* different. Is there more than one possibility? Answers on page 6.)

Figuring out the right items is just part of the fun in *Fooblitzky*. You

can bump into other players to steal their items; buy or sell items at the pawn shows at discount prices; ride the UGH (the underground gliding highway) to move around the city quickly; hide items from other players in lockers; and so on. And the Chance Man can show up any time, sometimes to help you, and sometimes to hinder you.

*Fooblitzky* is a lot like your favorite board game: you play against your friends or family rather than against the computer. As in interactive fiction, there are dozens or hundreds of alternatives at every turn. And there are so many possibilities in *Fooblitzky*, no two games are alike. We've even put several variations into the program, so you can make the game easier, harder, or stranger.

*Fooblitzky* is available *only* through *The New Zork Times*. Each

package contains a game disk, short rules (to get you started), long rules (to answer any questions that might come up), 4 colorful wipe-clean worksheets, and marker pens. Included in the instructions are suggestions for game variations. *Fooblitzky* costs \$39.95 and is available for the IBM PC with 128K and a graphics card (but not the PCjr), for the Atari XL and XE with 48K plus an 810 or 1050 disk drive, and for the Apple II series with 128K.



## Answers to Puzzle Number Seven

There was a problem with Puzzle Seven, but it wasn't really our fault. To be specific:

You may have fond memories of the company that *used* to print and mail *The New York Times*, as well as fill mail orders for games and *InvisiClues*<sup>™</sup>. Fond memories like ordering a copy of *Deadline* for your Kaypro and receiving a copy of *Infidel*<sup>®</sup> for a TRS-80 Model I seven months later. We emphasize "used to," because last year we switched to a much more reliable company.

To keep a long story long, this original company was a bit peeved when we decided to take our business elsewhere; they proceeded to go down in a blaze of glory by refusing to turn over the computer tapes containing our *New York Times* mailing list, of which they had the only copies. Were it not for some high-powered maneuvering by our lawyers, the Summer '85 issue of *The New York Times* might have never come out; as it was, most people received their copies between late October and mid-November (depending on the vagaries of bulk rate mail).

Among the problems caused by this delay was that most people received their issue after the deadline for Puzzle Seven! Naturally, we decided to extend the deadline, to December 1. We like to think of it this way: realizing that you could still enter after November 1 was just the first obstacle of the puzzle!

Here are all of the correct answers:

- A. 3.5
- B. 4
- C. 5
- D. 5

- E. 5
- F. 7
- G. 7
- H. 8
- I. 12
- J. 12
- K. 12
- L. 21
- M. 25
- N. 29
- O. 47
- P. 51
- Q. 55
- R. 64
- S. 73
- T. 75
- U. 75
- V. 90.8
- W. 134
- X. 155
- Y. 192
- Z. 200
- AA. 300
- BB. 312
- CC. 350
- DD. 351
- EE. 467
- FF. 1000
- GG. 1308
- HH. 1327
- II. 753
- JJ. 1698
- KK. 1868
- LL. 1887
- MM. 1920
- NN. 1937
- OO. 2138
- PP. 4216
- QQ. 4986
- RR. 23,393
- SS. 23,521

The correct answer, the one out of numerical order, is II. We received a mere 48 entries, either because the puzzle was difficult, or because

many people were discouraged by the "early" deadline. Of those, 26 were correct (54%).

The most common wrong answer was K. This seems to be due to people calculating the number of days it took *your* expedition to reach the campsite, not the number of days it took Ellingsworth's 1920 expedition to reach the campsite. (See the note on the parchment map.)

We also have a new statistic for Puzzle Seven: percentage of people complaining. Thirty-three percent of all entries contained notes or letters complaining about the deadline.

Since there were 26 correct answers, only one entrant got the correct answer but no T-shirt: Maggie Dupuis, who will probably spend weeks avoiding ladders, black cats, and broken (or breaking) mirrors. Here are the other twenty-five:

1. E. Gene Simpson  
Mountain View, CA
2. Ed Schraut  
Sumter, SC
3. Matthew Strange  
Mansfield, PA
4. Mary Sauer  
Circleville, OH
5. Sue Whitman  
Lexington, NC
6. Robert Wagner  
Cleveland, OH
7. Daniel Louie  
Burke, VA


8. Betty Scourby  
Brooklyn, NY
9. R. Reid Hutchinson  
Rockville, MD
10. Mike Smith  
San Pedro, CA
11. Greg Haas  
Weymouth, MA
12. Gary Laskowski  
Roseville, MI
13. Charles M. Carter, Jr.  
Richmond, VA
14. Tony Ard  
Tillamook, OR
15. Carole Weyandt  
Claysburg, PA
16. Mary Foss  
Flora, IL
17. Paul Mattia  
Sterling, VA
18. Kurt Culler  
Redford, MI
19. Ted Durant  
South Sioux City, NE
20. Ben Bunnell  
Rustburg, VA
21. Paul Thoms  
Whittier, CA
22. David Rowell  
Marietta, NY
23. Andy Plotkin  
Rockville, MD
24. Neil R. Polo  
Yardley, PA
25. Michael Rudolph  
Los Angeles, CA

## Answers to Fooblitzky Puzzle

Assuming that the two 16-fooble items are different, the 4 right items must be a banana, a light bulb, an eyedropper, and a saw. If the two 16-fooble items can be the same, another possibility exists: namely, the 4 right items could be a banana, a snake, a saw, and another saw.


There are many ways to figure this out. For those of you who are completely stumped, look again at Player 2's visit to City Hall. He's carrying 3 items, and 2 of them are right. Since the light bulb and the snake can't *both* be right items (since they both cost 8 foobles), the banana *must* be a right item. And since the

banana is a right item, no other 4-fooble item can be right. And because we know that either the light bulb *or* the snake is right, we know that the other 8-fooble items *can't* be right. Thus, from Player 4's visit to City Hall, we know that the saw must be a right item (since the 4-fooble hair spray and the 8-fooble toothpaste can't be right). Get the idea?

Don't worry if you didn't figure out this *Fooblitzky* puzzle. Players can visit City Hall as often as they want. In a real game, information usually comes in bits and pieces, rather than all at once, as in this example. 


## NZT Puzzle Winners Update

Ever since stone-hearted, Scrooge-like Steve Meretzky announced that there was only one correct puzzle entry that wouldn't win an elegant, sought-after NZT Puzzle Winner T-shirt, a groundswell of opposition to his callousness has been building. Poor Maggie Dupuis, shivering T-shirtless in Wisconsin, victim of cruel chance! Vast contingents of

InfoSentimentalists have besieged Steve. "Well, what if there were twenty-seven correct entries? What then?" snarled the fearsomely bearded implementor. But yes, Maggie, there is a T-shirt! Over Steve's dead body (almost) a beautiful NZT T-shirt will soon wend its way west to your humble abode. 

## Spellbreaker Event

In an event inspired by equal parts of magic, Hollywood, and Flash Gordon, Infocom announced its newest fantasy title, *Spellbreaker*<sup>™</sup>. The event was held October 1, in the art-deco, 1930's-style Griffith Park Observatory in the hills overlooking Los Angeles. Guests were shown a spectacular laser show, fed on champagne and strawberries, and treated (if that's the right word) to remarks by InfoEventperson Renata Daroszewska, by InfoMarketing's Mike Dornbrook and by Dave

Lebling, the author of the game. After the event, the party adjourned outside to gaze at the stars (those few visible through what passes for an atmosphere in the LA area). Infocom's contingent made a futile effort to raise the general level of elegance and formality at the event: columnist Jerry Pournelle remarked, "It's a sad day when a game company requires its people to wear ties." There was a general rush for the few dozen incredibly elegant Enchanters Guild pins, however. 

**NEW YORK TIMES PUZZLE**

**NUMBER 9**

Archivists everywhere, rejoice! The New York Times Puzzle Rules Committee (NZTPRC), in session at their annual winter meeting, approved a significant change to the venerable puzzle rules: Entrants will no longer be required to cut up their copies of the NZT in order to enter the puzzle. A photocopy of the entry form will now be accepted! (Well, there really isn't a Rules Committee. Mike Dornbrook just decided that his reasons for not allowing photocopies were all silly.)

For a change of pace, here's a puzzle that requires no knowledge of specific works of Infocom's interactive fiction. The following seven excerpts are each from hypothetical works of interactive fiction, based on films and TV shows of various types. Your task is to determine the name of the character you play in each excerpt. Both first and last name are required in cases where they exist. The name of the actor who portrayed the character is not acceptable. To help you get started, we have filled in the first answer.

**Number One:**

Bedroom, in the canopied bed  
You are in a vast bedroom, filled with antique statues, heated by an enormous fireplace.

>LOOK AT THE TRINKET

The trinket is a little glass ball, filled with water, depicting a winter scene. Some white particles are settled at the bottom of the ball.

>SHAKE THE TRINKET  
(taking the trinket first)

The little white flakes flurry around inside the ball, resembling a snowfall.

>SAY "ROSEBUD"

With the word still hanging on your lips, an enormous weariness overwhelms you. The ball drops from your hand and smashes on the ground.

\*\*\*\* You have died. \*\*\*\*

**Number Two:**

Airport

Dim halos of light barely pierce the fog that drifts across the airfield. A propellor revs to life nearby.

Ilsa Lund is here, her eyes moist.

Louis Renault, the Prefect of Police, stands nearby.

>I

You are carrying:  
a gun  
letters of transit

>ILSA, GET ON THE PLANE  
"You'll have to do the thinking for both of us."

**Number Three:**

Canyon

You are in a dry arroyo between towering, wind-carved cliffs of brown and yellow rocks.

There is a shipping carton here.

The shipping carton contains:  
a strange, belt-like machine

>READ THE SHIPPING  
CARTON

"Acme Rocket Belt"

>PUT ON THE ROCKET BELT  
You are now wearing the rocket belt.

>FIRE THE ROCKET BELT  
You shoot upwards and smash into an overhanging cliff. The impact sends you shooting downward, imbedding your body halfway into the ground. The overhand, which has broken loose, lands on top of you.

**Number Four:**

Living Area

This is the central room of the house, filled with couches, exotic plants, and a table laden with fruit.

Dr. Morbius and several crew members are here, engaged in conversation.

Morbius hands you an object, which you immediately analyze to be a simple blaster. Morbius asks, "Have you analyzed it?"

>MORBIUS, YES  
"What is it?"

>REPLY "A SIMPLE BLASTER"  
Morbius nods. "Point the blaster at the Captain."

**Number Five:**

General's Office

This is the office of General Jack D. Ripper. The General's desk sits in front of wide, venetian blind-covered windows. Doors lead south, to the hall, and west, to the General's private bathroom.

>SOUTH

"I'm afraid I can't allow you to leave until the bombers have finished their mission," says the General, chomping on his cigar stub.

>GENERAL, TELL ME ABOUT  
THE MISSION

"I can no longer sit idly by and allow the Communists to fluoridate our water and sap our precious bodily fluids."

**Number Six:**

Porch

This is the weathered front porch of the house. A closed screen door leads westward into the house. You can leave the porch to the east.

Mr. Martin is standing in the doorway.

There is a particularly yummy bone here.

>BARK

"What! Timmy's fallen down and broken his leg! Where?"

>BARK

"In the old Johnson barn! Let's go!"

**Number Seven:**

Near the El

You are standing at a downtown intersection, next to the elevated subway. Streets lead off in all four directions.

A subway car is passing by.

>DESTROY THE SUBWAY CAR  
You push the car off the tracks. It crashes to the ground below, spilling screaming passengers out into the street, and crushing dozens of pedestrians.

[Your score has just gone up by 10 points!]

>INVENTORY

You are carrying:  
Ann Darrow

**ANSWERS**

1) Charles Foster Kane

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

6) \_\_\_\_\_

7) \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

T-shirt size (S, M, L, XL): \_\_\_\_\_

**RULES:**

1. All entries must be submitted on this form OR A PHOTOCOPY OF THIS FORM.
2. All entries must be received by March 1, 1986.
3. Limit of one entry per person.
4. Up to 25 prizes will be awarded. If more than 25 correct answers are received, a drawing will be held to determine the winners. Void where prohibited by law, of course.

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