

WHERE DO I PUBLISH?

When I finished my first fanzine, issue #1 of ENTROPY BLUES, in 1986, I didn't know where to send it. I made forty copies and, apart from the one I kept for myself, I gave all the rest away to friends and relatives. Only two or three recipients were actual fanzine fans, and they, being local, gave me their response verbally to my face. Never did receive a loc.

Like so many other fans pubbing their ish for the first time, the response didn't seem to justify the effort, so I gave up. I didn't get back into zinedom till I was invited to become editor of BCSFAzine (BCSFA club newsletter) about a decade later, and then, retiring from being the 'God-Editor' of BCSFAzine (talk about an eye-catching persona) five years on, I plunged into zinedom as a major hobby quite easily as I had learned so much about that particular branch of SF fandom by then. Call it a 15 year learning curve.

Well, I'm going to offer you a shortcut.

If you respond to these three articles by writing and publishing your own fanzine...

And you send me a copy via email, either as a word document or a pdf...

And it is less (preferably MUCH less) than 20,000 K in size...

And has something to do with science fiction one way or another...

And is NOT seething with anger or full of pornography...

And is sprightly and fun to read (though I don't hold people to high standards with their very first zine)... interesting will do...

THEN I WILL HOST YOUR ZINE ON THIS WEBSITE!

Where, obviously, people interested in genre zines are checking in all the time and a good percentage of them will be bound to check out YOUR zine precisely because it is new and hopefully exciting...

Plus I will review your zine on site (and in one of my own zines)...

And I will send you a loc for your next issue...

And I will encourage others to review and loc your zine.

Darn good deal, I say. This way you avoid thrusting your zine out into the void and hoping for the best from the dark unknown. This web site appears to be developing a fairly high profile among zine fans, so why not take advantage of my offer? Costs nothing. Other than the 'blood, sweat, and tears' that go into creating your first zine.

Also, my offer stands for further issues as you create them. Let the Cdn. SF Zine Archive be home base for your zine!

A reasonably secure home, since I intend to maintain this site for as long as I live and remain sane and alert (could last for months I tell you... months!).

With any luck I could wind up hosting a dozen or more zines. Yours could be one of them.

Another place you can send your zine is Bill Burn's excellent www.efanzines.com where hundreds of issues of zines from all over fandom, not just Canada, are stored and visible to anyone who wants to read them.

Some of the zines he hosts are better described as being 'preserved' since they are long defunct. But the majority are ongoing, still being published. You can tell which ones easily enough because he reproduces the covers of the newest zines in the announcement listing which is the first page you see before scrolling down to the archive proper. Some zines are published by newbies like yourself, others by fans with decades of experience.

Take my advice. Select the zines from Burn's site that you like best, then loc them. Get to know the editor. Then send them your zine (traditionalists prefer a hard copy arriving in the mail, but many faneds are open to zines arriving by email) and ask them to loc. Not all will respond, but it'll add to the attraction and 'flavour' of your zine when they do.

Which reminds me, the ubiquitous Lloyd Penney is GUARANTEED to loc your zine once he receives it. That's his hobby. Loccing zines. He's quite famous for it. He's even won awards.

Speaking of which, if you publish your zine here (and/or anywhere else on a reasonable scale of distribution and fan awareness) this year, you become eligible to be nominated in the following year for an Aurora Award, a FAAn Award, a Faned Award, and even (extreme long shot, only one Canadian zine has ever won) a Hugo award.

Any zine editor who wins all four in a given year would be an instant fannish legend, believe me.

In reality, the best a Canadian fan can routinely hope for are nominations to the Auroras and Faneds (both being Canadian awards reserved for Canadians). But that in itself is a heck of a prize. It means peer recognition. It means somebody out there likes what you do. And it is always good publicity for your zine.

And someday winning an Aurora or a Faned is entirely within the realm of possibility. If a lot of people really enjoy and appreciate your zine, it IS possible.

Talk about an egoboost! Fans speak of egoboo, of craving egoboo. It is simply that sensation of pleasure and accomplishment you experience, a boost to your ego as it were, when someone acknowledges and even praises your fanzine.

And then there is segoboo, or self-induced egoboo, that pleasure of accomplishment and satisfaction you feel upon completing your zine and releasing it to the fannish world.

Eventually you'll wind up with a mailing list of 'subscribers,' a list of people who actually WANT to read your zine.

I'm telling you, for a shy and somewhat solitary fan, or any fan with time on their hands looking for a terrific hobby, 'pubbing your ish' can be a very rewarding ongoing experience.

Look at me, I keep doing it, not because I'm an idiot (though I might be), but because I get a tremendous kick out of it.

My zine fanac (fan activity) gives me enormous pleasure. It is a hobby wherein I express myself in as creative a manner as I am capable of. Some people paint. Some write poetry. I publish zines. That's my 'thing.' It is what I do. Consequently I am never bored. Life is good.

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You've read this far in the three articles. I assume that means the idea of publishing your own fanzine intrigues you.

Try it.

You can contact me at < rgraeme[at]shaw.ca > for advice or if you just want to run some concept ideas past me...

...to use an old Madison Avenue term, and if you know what that means it suggests you are as old as I am – my point being zinedom is a great hobby for retirees...

But also a great hobby for young enthusiasts bursting onto the scene with energy and fresh perspective...

A great hobby for anybody, really...

So give it some thought...

And PUB YOUR ISH!

Cheers! The Graeme