

# Local cartoonist eyes the big time

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT  
The Herald

Brian Lemay's unlikely hero, 'The Zit' is preparing to pop on the shelves of comic book stores across North America in a new comic called Lethargic Comics, Weakly.

Mr. Lemay, formerly of Georgetown, is one of five Sheridan College-based comic book artists who are set to release their first edition of Lethargic Comics, Weakly, in a

full-sized, 32-page comic book format slated to be on the shelves in Toronto by May and across North America by June.

The comic features six hapless heroes; Lethargic Lad, Guy With a Gum, Walrus Boy, The Grad, HIM and The Zit, who were created by Greg Hyland of Burlington, Luc Latulippe of Cornwall, Steve Remen of Hamilton and John Migliore of Hamilton. These cartoonists are all students of the college's animation course

which Mr. Lemay teaches.

Lethargic Comics got its start as a one-man operation working out of editor Greg Hyland's basement during his high school years. Since then, Hyland's illustrious hero, Lethargic Lad, have been featured in approximately 60 paper issues of Lethargic Comics, which were only sold in select establishments and at Sheridan College.

This year, said Mr. Lemay, the group decided the time was right to branch out and launch the series across the continent.

Lemay's character, 'The Zit' was born several years ago after an incident with a co-worker suffering from acne. Before he became a professor at the college, Mr. Lemay worked as an animator and layout supervisor with a Toronto-based animation business. Some of Mr. Lemay's work is featured in cartoons including The Smurfs, Inspector Gadget (he made the Mad Henchmen), Care Bears, The Flintstone Kids and Teddy Ruxpin.

While at work one day, he noticed a man at the photocopy

machine with what appeared to be a large pimple on his ear. Mr. Lemay bluntly asked him if it was a pimple and the man literally ran away.

"It was such an unusual reaction, I couldn't get the idea out of my head," remembers Mr. Lemay, who, after the incident, went home and created the comic character, whose head turns into a pimple after he consumes a massive quantity of sugar.

"His super power is that he can shoot puss out of the top of his head," said Mr. Lemay, "but he never uses it. His fear is that if he does, he will die or lose his head."

He likens his character to real people who have a gift but don't know how to use it.

"I see myself in him. A lot of the time, people have special abilities. For instance, my ability is I can draw. But in times of crisis, it never seems to be enough. Sometimes I say, yeah, I have this ability, but what good is it?"

Mr. Lemay admits his hero could be considered 'gross' by some people but believes 'The

Zit' is a new breed of hero that is being featured in Lethargic Comics. Each hero in the comic book is somewhat lethargic, unpopular, unintelligent or goofy.

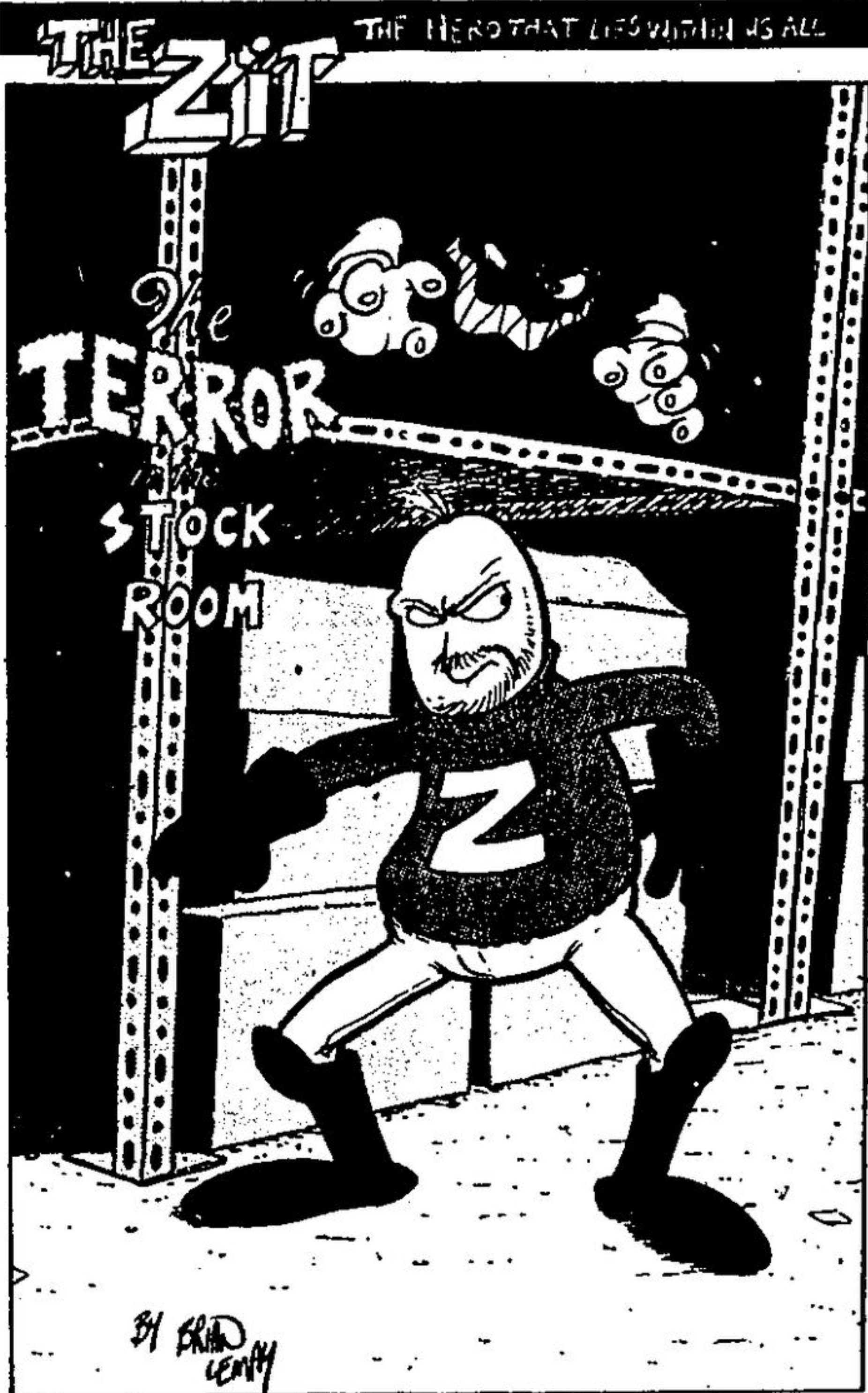
But Mr. Lemay said that was the intention.

"Lethargic comics are sort of a spoof of Action Comics Weekly which features what are commonly known as super heroes," he said.

Creating the character represents a return to his first professional love, cartooning. Mr. Lemay said he always wanted to be a cartoonist and intended to take cartooning at Sheridan but the course was cancelled the year he enrolled so he took animation instead.

Through the years, he did some cartooning for papers including the Halton Hills Herald, but this is the first time he has done it on a large scale.

Approximately 10,000 copies of Lethargic Comics have been printed and will eventually be distributed through 5,700 stores in Canada and the U.S. at a list price of \$1.95 Canadian and \$1.70 U.S.



Working on 'The Zit's' next adventure for 'Lethargic Comics, Weakly', is cartoonist, Brian Lemay, formerly of Georgetown. His character and five others have just been released in a first-edition,

full-sized comic book slated to be on shelves across North America in June. (Herald photo by Lisa Boonstoppel-Pot)



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