## KIDS page

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## Strange Tales\_\_\_\_\_by Captain Comic

Welcome everyone, and follow me into a world of strange tales and fantasy. A world of good vs. evil, of mystery and magic. Enter the world of the comic book. They're not just for kids.

First off, let me introduce myself. The name's Mike Waskalik, but you may call me Captain Comic, leader of the infamous Comic Junkies. This article or column, if you will, is all about

this great phenomena called the comic book and its strange tales and stories. But we mustn't speak here - it's not safe - there may be goulish villains in the shadows. So, follow me around the corner and into the FOURTH DIMENSION.

Let us begin at the beginning, the origin of the comic book. Does anyone know where comics came from? Here's a hint - look at what's in your hand. Newspapers.

You got it! I knew you could. It all started way back in the

early 1900's when publishing companies, along with brand name sponsors, decided to reprint newspaper strips in a 7.5" x 10" format and give them away as radioshow promotions.

In 1933, "Funnies on Parade," a reprinting of newspaper strips, such as Joe Palooka, Mutt and Jeff, and Reglar Fellas, went into production for Proctor and Gamble and given away as premiums.

Then, in 1934, M.C. Gaines, who spearheaded the production of Funnies on Parade, believed that youngsters would buy comic books for ten cents, like the "Big Little Books" coming out at that

So, in 1934, Eastern Colour ran off 35,000 copies of "Famous Funnies Series 1," 64 pages of reprints for Dell Publishing Company to be sold for one dime in chain stores. Since it sold out quickly on the stands, "Famous Funnies No. 1" (dated July 1934) was issued which became, with issue No. 2 in July, the first monthly comic book.

With that title well established as a monthly book (which lasted 20 years), other companies formed and began printing reprints into a comic format.

In 1936, Detective Picture Stories was issued in December by the Comics Magazine Company, the first non-reprint comic book devoted to a single theme. In 1937, another single theme title was introduced and called Detective Comics, which came from National Periodical Publications, later known as "DC" comics.

It wasn't until 1938 that the comic book industry was introduced to the "super-hero." This

would change comics forever. Action Comics No. 1 was published in June by DC, which contained the first appearance of Superman by writer Jerry Siegel and artist Joe Shuster. The "Man of Steel" inaugurated the "Golden Era" in comic book history.

In 1939, DC's success was assured in May with the publication of Detective Comics No. 27, containing the first episode of Batman by artist Bob Kane and writer Bill Finger.

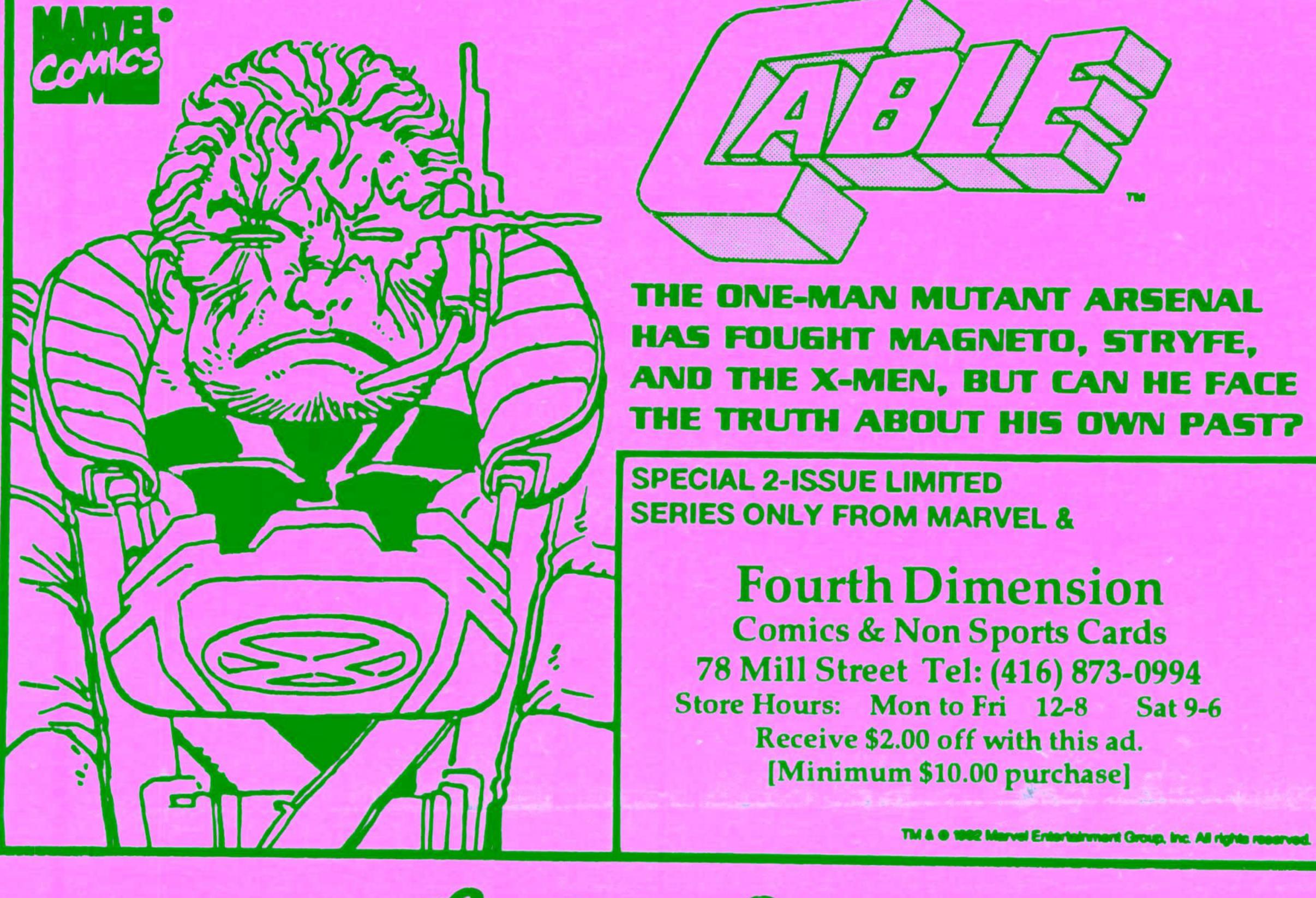
The Batman and Superman are the front runners of the age in which comics were young, the Golden age. It was their success that has given comics what it is today - imaginative, fun, and never-ending.

Next week will have the continuation of the origin of comics. But until then, I'll leave you with this: A friend told me this of the music business, which I feel applies to comics as well:

Space Teeter quotes:

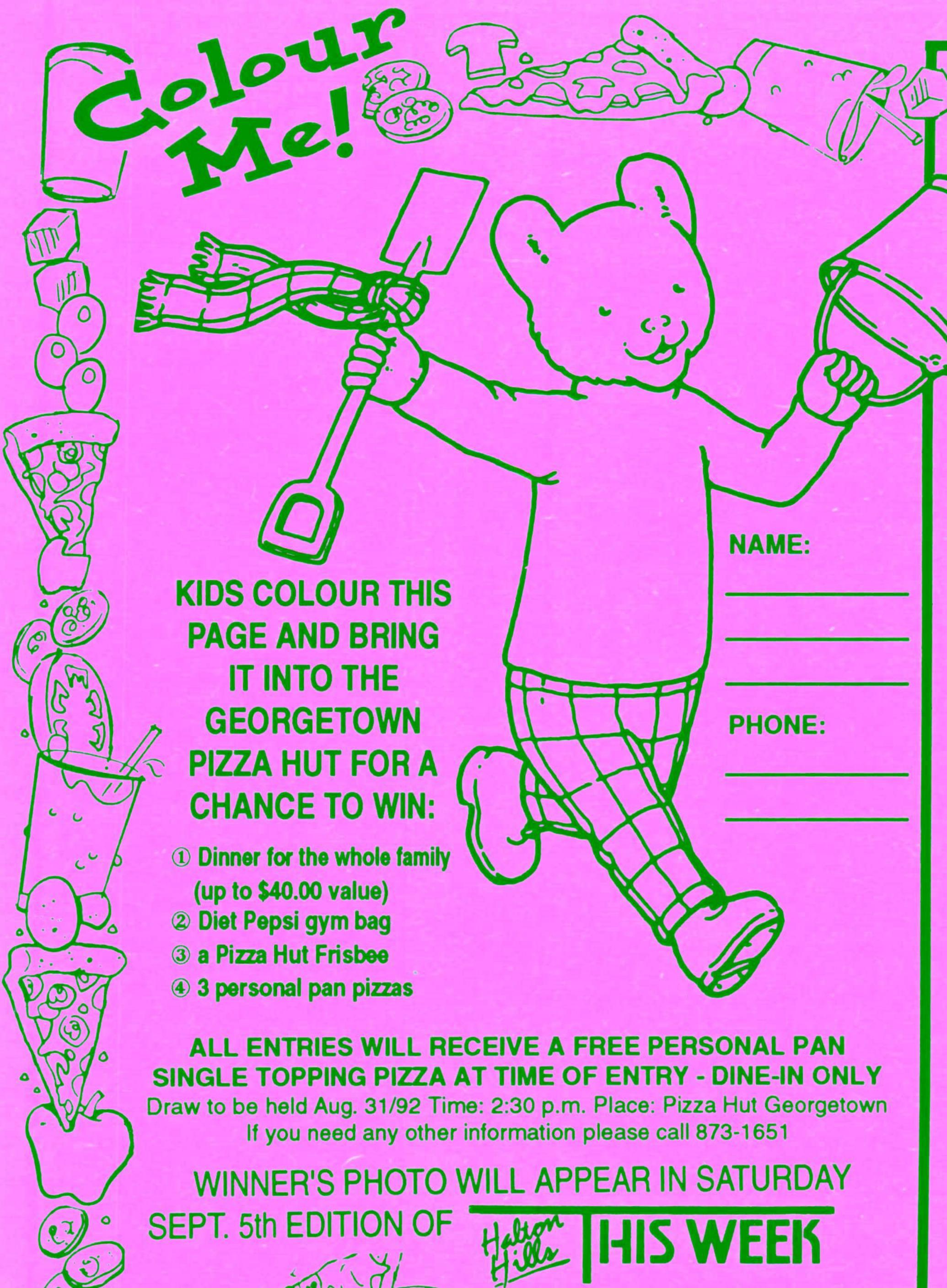
First rule: There are no rules. Second rule: Now, here's the rules."

Remember, comics aren't just for kids. This is Mike from the Fourth Dimension with another Strange Tale.



COMIC TRIVIA - "What do the initials DC stand for in DC Comics? Drop your written answers off at Fourth Dimension, 78 Mill St., Georgetown and you could win "Amazing Spiderman #361 (first appearance of Carnage). Winner to be announced each week in my column.

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