



FILETTO^a



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Editorial Notes by Mike Glycer

Running Out of Year: There's more to come – in another issue. Next time I'll tell all in "How I Won the Hugo But Lost the Civil War." You'll have to wait a little longer for that, still, I don't believe you'll find a shortage of worthwhile articles in these pages.

Look for Diana's Book in 2007: Diana's book *The Company They Keep: C. S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien as Writers in Community* draws closer to publication every day – it will be released in February 2007. We've learned that readying a book for publication is an endless series of crises, really, fodder worthy of a book in itself! Diana and her helpers spent the summer responding to comments from Kent State University Press's editors and then spent the fall correcting page proofs. David Bratman finished the index. Now the book is in production.

The Company They Keep tells how Lewis and Tolkien and the other members of the Inklings influenced one another. Several leading scholars have given Diana wonderful "blurbs" – pithy endorsements used to advertise books. Kent State University Press includes Diana's book in their online catalog, and you can order it online at Amazon.com and a lot of other places.

Sierra's Toy — Ol' Whatsisname? Sierra's every discovery, her every smile, seem unforgettable at the time. So we are horrified to admit how vague our memories have already become about some of the names in her roll-call of dolls and stuffed animals.

Some of Sierra's playmates have earned immortal fame. I could never forget Mr. Bunny, whose name I always pronounced in fake French "bun-nay" (accent on the second syllable). And Mr. Blue Elephant, the finger puppet astronaut I threw into "outer space."

But when Diana asked me the name of a



little cloth monkey, it took me overnight to remember she was Missy Monkey (so named to offset the number of toys being called "Mister"). And who could forget the blue terrycloth puppy with chewable plastic paws in four different textures, gnawed by the hour in Sierra's babyhood, good old – uh, whatsisname... ?

I couldn't remember for a very long time. Then I went in to wake Sierra one sunny morning at the end of the summer. Peeking from under the covers was a blue head and two pink and yellow paws and it just popped into my head, "Oh, there's Bart." Bart the Puppy.

Mommy and Daddy were the ones who named all these toys we're having trouble remembering, back before Sierra could say more than a few words. Once she could speak, she named her own toys, and she has a steel-trap memory for all their identities. There's brown-haired Carly, blondes Fraka and Bala, and cabbage patch doll Allison. Babies Leah and Alex are the namesakes of two kids in the *Signing Time* videos. And she remembers her now-infinite number of Polly Pockets dolls.

Trufen Watch: It's not easy explaining

the continued existence of Trufen.net, but I can tell you as much as I know. Victor Gonzalez's fannish news website performed impressively for many months. He scoured the world for stories, sometimes posting three or four news items a day. He built a community around his site that attracted fans from both sides of the Atlantic. His friendship with Peter Weston was a key, because Weston's contributions attracted an enormous readership. Victor also knew that controversy is the mother's milk of the internet, and he happily imported from the Trufen list quite a few of rich brown's patriarchal ramblings about zines and fandom.

Victor gave me and a few other fans editorial access to post people's submissions and stories of our own. I wrote a couple dozen things for the site.

Not quite a year ago, Victor suddenly stopped posting stories and quit updating various sidebar features he has the only access to modify. Perhaps it had to do with changes in his personal life, not the least his marriage to Tamara Menteer on August 19.

The site is still live – somebody is keeping the server plugged in and paying for internet hosting. So I've kept on using my editor's access to keep Trufen.net from going dormant, infrequently updating the news with my own and other fans' submissions. Weston even posted a comment inquiring about doing another column and I encouraged him to do one but he hasn't -- I'm sure things aren't the same without Victor to cheer him on.

Meantime, I don't have access to make any changes in the site. I wouldn't have any way to get things fixed if the hardware or software crashed. Of course, I don't have to pay any of the bills, either. I'm not in touch with Victor. I did see him logged on one time within the last couple months so he hasn't completely forgotten about his creation..

Washington Power Outage

A ferocious windstorm that began on December 14 knocked out power to more than 1.5 million homes and businesses in the Pacific Northwest. Wrai and Carol Ballard in Seattle were without power for one day. Burnett R. Toskey near Olympia lost power and when it had not returned after two nights his 97-year-old mother decided to check in at a motel. Burnett got her settled in the motel, but when he returned home their power was back. His mother ended up paying \$85 for a 2-hour motel stay.

Greatly Exaggerated

After hearing the rumors circulating around Loscon this past Thanksgiving weekend, Bjo Trimble wanted people to stop worrying about her dyeing:

“There is a rumor going around science fiction fandom that I am practically on my deathbed from a stroke or heart attack. Suffice it to say that the rumor is being spread by someone who is not, shall we say, friendly toward me. In truth, aside from fibromyalgia and arthritis, both of which hurt but won't kill me, I am doing pretty well for 73 years old. I have a challenging job teaching developmentally disabled adults how to sew and make crafts. I am planning on a weaving and dyeing trip to the Mayan Highlands in March 2007. My goal for my 75th birthday is an archaeological dig in Denmark. Please tell anyone who has heard the rumor that I'm OK. Thanks. PS: John is doing fine, too.”

HANA

HANA, Hertz Across to Nippon Alliance, is the one-time fan fund created by Murray Moore to send John Hertz to Nippon2007. This fund was started at L.A.con IV and as Moore explains, “The Send John Hertz to Japan Fan Fund was my idea. I suggested a fund; I offered to do the work; John accepted my offer.” John will only be able to attend Nippon 2007 if the fund raises what is needed to get him there -- and home.

This is the latest in a long tradition of one-off fan funds reaching back to WAW with the Crew that brought Walt Willis to the 1952 Worldcon. Other funds created to bring a particular person to a con have included the Trans-Oceanic Fan Fund which imported Takumi Shibano to the '64 Worldcon, several funds run by Geri Sullivan in the 1980s (the Wimpy Zone Fan Fund, the Mystery Fan Fund, and the Harris Fund), the fund that paid Dave Langford's way to Aus-siecon 3, the Bring Bruce Bayside fund to import Bruce Gillespie to attend the one-week-apart Potlatch and Corflu in 2004, and the “Get Harry” fund to bring UK fanartist



News of Fandom

Harry Bell to Austin for Corflu Quire in February 2007.

Murray Moore wrote online: “John will be a wonderful representative of English-speaking fandom to the Japanese fans. John is a con runner with multiple interests and talents, as you know, including Masquerade judge, Regency Dance teacher, Art Show docent, and classic SF novel panel moderator. John prefers to sleep on the floor. More seriously John has a special interest in Japanese culture. He is an admirer, and a writer, of the Japanese form of poetry called *haiku*.”

“John attending the 2007 Worldcon will be a benefit to the Japanese fans. A committee member has asked John if he is attending. If John is asked by the committee to be part of the programming, is there any doubt that he will agree? Regency dancing would need little translation, I suggest.”

Should the Hertz to Japan fund raise too little to allow him to make the trip, or raises enough to leave a surplus after he takes the trip, the balance will be divided equally between DUFF, GUFF, and TAFF.

Over \$1,100 has been donated to the fund so far. Please make donations payable to Janice Murray and mail them to her at P.O. Box 75684, Seattle, WA 98175 U.S. You can follow the fund's progress on its own website, <http://sjhtn2007.livejournal.com>. You can also contact Moore directly about the fund at this e-mail address: sjhtnippon2007@yahoo.ca

JETS

One of seven nominated European fans will have his or her way paid to Nippon 2007 by the Japan Expeditionary Travel Scholarship (JETS).

The candidates are:

- Abi Brown (*Nominators*: Lilian Ed-

wards, Sue Mason, Max (hawkida), Douglas Spencer)

- Jim de Liscard (*Nominators*: James Bacon, Alison Freebairn, Anders Holmström, Tobes Valois)
- Jukka Halme (*Nominators*: Johan Anglemark, Olav M J Christiansen, Toni Jerrman, Tero Ykspetäjä)
- Tom Nanson ('FanTom') and Teddy (*Nominators*: Lissa Allcock, Fran Dowd, Nicole Kipar, Barbara Stewart)
- Chris O'Shea ('The Magician') (*Nominators*: Nigel Furlong, Marcus Streets, Peter Weston, Nik Whitehead)
- Liam Proven (*Nominators*: Erik Arthur, Dave Langford, Alice Lawson, Caroline Mullan)
- Robert 'nojay' Sneddon (*Nominators*: Andrew A Adams, Tim Illingworth, Charlie Stross, Dave Tompkins)

...plus, of course, that veteran of fan fund races, No preference.

Seed money for this one-off fan fund will be provided by The League of Fan Funds, the British fan organization that raises money for all the ongoing fan funds, and by a grant of at least £1,000 from Interaction, the 2005 Worldcon. The remaining funds will come from the usual mixture of voting fees, auctions and miscellaneous donations.

The creators of the fund say they expect the winner to “produce some form of report about their trip – not least to inform and/or entertain those voters who weren't able to make the trip themselves – within a year.”

Copies of the ballot can be obtained at: <http://astralpole.org/?section=News>

The nomination and voting process will be administered for Interaction by the League of Fan Funds (LFF), which currently consists of Claire Brialey, Alison Scott, and Flick. Voting is open to any science fiction

fan based in Europe who has been active in fandom since before 2005; or who was a member of Interaction, and who contributes at least £3 or 5 euros to the fund with their vote.

Make sterling cheques payable to "League of Fan Funds" and euro cheques payable to "Vincent Docherty."

Votes must reach the administrators by midnight (British Summer Time), April 13, 2007.

DUFF 2007

Down Under Fan Fund administrators Norman Cates and Joe Siclari are now calling for nominations for Australasian fans to travel to the 2007 NASFiC in Illinois. On their newly-unveiled website the pair explain, "Those of you who are paying attention will note that under normal circumstances this year the DUFF trip would be from the U.S. to Australasia. However in 2006 there were no takers for the Australasia to U.S. trip, so we decided to make the 2007 year an Australasia to U.S. trip."

Each candidate must be nominated by three Australasian fans and two North American fans. Each candidate will have a written platform and promises (barring Acts of God) to travel to the 2007 NASFiC, Archon 31 and to serve as administrator of the fund until the next Australasian delegate is elected.

Nominations close 25th February, 2007. They must be submitted to Norman Cates, P.O. Box 13-574, Johnsonville, Wellington, New Zealand, E-mail: normanc@clear.net.nz, or Joe Siclari, 661 Hanover St., Yorktown Heights, NY 10598-5901 USA.

TAFF Takes 2007 Off

The Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund will be skipping the projected 2007 race because of the prolonged suspense over whether there would be an Eastercon for the delegate to attend.

It had been difficult enough to find two North American candidates to make a race, though after extending the deadline for nominations Suzanne Tompkins, North American TAFF Administrator, and Bridget Bradshaw, European TAFF Administrator, secured two qualified competitors in Chris Garcia and Mary Kay Kare. However, they delayed issuing the ballot for a short time while deciding how to address prospects that the 2007 Eastercon, the TAFF delegates' destination con, might not take place.

At the end of October the committee officially cancelled Convoy, the 2007 British Eastercon planned for the Adelphi Hotel. Dave Langford pronounced judgment on



James Murray, Paula Helm Murray and Margene Bahm in a public ceremony of Commitment at ConQuest 37. Photo by Keith Stokes.

those who'd withheld support because of a dislike of the site: "All those determined whingers who went on and bloody on about their dislike of the Adelphi Hotel (where I've enjoyed several fine conventions) have got what they presumably wanted: no Eastercon for 2007."

The TAFF administrators decided the wisest response was not to select a delegate for 2007. Their announcement reported, "Both TAFF candidates, Mary Kay Kare and Chris Garcia, have agreed that this is the best course of action."

The fund will not be revived until 2008, though a team of British conrunners will salvage Eastercon by organizing a replacement con. This new convention is called Contemplation and is co-chaired by Chris O'Shea and Fran Dowd.

Harry Payne of Convoy has joined the Contemplation committee, to preserve continuity and to pass on the conferred authority of fandom to run the Eastercon. All Convoy Guests of Honour will be invited to attend Contemplation as guests, and take part in the programme, and we will confirm this as soon as possible.

CUFF

Brian Davis wrote online in June that due to ill health he had been unable to fulfill his duties as Canadian Unity Fan Fund administrator. No well-publicized developments followed his announcement that it was too late to arrange a delegate for 2006, although he named one Vancouver fan (Mike Omelusik) as expressing interest in becoming the CUFF delegate for 2006.

When Brian wrote CUFF had a bank balance of \$1262.64. His CUFF website is still online, though it hasn't been updated since Brian loaded his own bio as the 2005 delegate:

<http://cuff.cometdust.ca/>.

Interestingly, Brian's bio ends by men-

tioning that he is a Bid Committee member for Anticipation, the Montreal in 2009 WorldCon.

ConQuest 37 Hosts Murray²-Bahm Commitment Ceremony

After 13 years of cohabitation James Murray, Paula Helm Murray and Margene Bahm, collectively known as the Murray-Bahms, celebrated their lives together in a public ceremony of Commitment at ConQuest 37. As Margene explained, it is "as close to marriage as we can legally get." The ceremony was presided over by Charles Piehl.

Yalow on the Air

The November 10 edition of NPR's "Marketplace" radio show discussed "fan cons" with Ben Yalow and Adam Malin from Creation Entertainment.

Laurie Mann described the experience on Smofs: "So I'm eating my breakfast, listening to NPR, and the announcer says they're going to talk about something that makes four billion dollars a year. There's obscure Star Trek music in the background. Suddenly, I hear Ben Yalow's voice describing conventions."

Yalow was interviewed by Joal Ryan, a reporter covering L.A.con, after she heard him on the Trek history panel.

Meanwhile, Back at the NESFA

Mark Olson reported to the July 30 NESFA business meeting that new bookshelf extensions had been installed. In the process they coined a new measurement called "the Paula" when the height of the new shelves was noted as three Paulas. At the same meeting Chip Hitchcock said, "Please note that there are still lots of books to dust off, re-sort and move into space created by the new shelves. This will take some time, since many books were shelved out of order when we were tight on space..." It's surprising NESFA just didn't declare this to be the normal state of affairs cover it by coining another new term for an unusual rule of order – the Standlee.



Gilliland Wins 2006 Rotsler Award

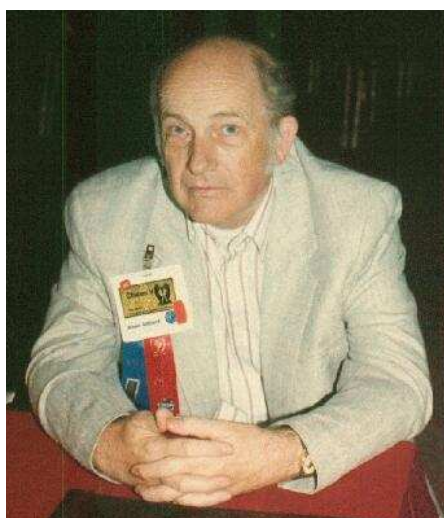


Alexis Gilliland received the 2006 Rotsler Memorial Fanzine Artist Award at LAcon IV. Sponsored by the Southern California Institute for Fan Interests (SCIFI), the Rotsler Award honors the lifetime work of outstanding fanartists and the memory of esteemed fanartist William Rotsler. The annual award consists of \$300 cash and an award plaque. John Hertz, Maureen Kincaid Speller and Mike Glyer served as this year's award judges.

Gilliland received the award in recognition of his current fanac as well as his outstanding contributions to fan art over the last few decades. He is generous in sharing his art, and uniquely talented. His work is insightful and humorous. He is one of the best and most prolific fan artists ever.

The award appropriately reunites the names of two fanartists who often worked on cartoons. Gilliland recalled his first "collaboration" with Rotsler in a memoir for *Mimosa 29*:

"[A]fter we were both Hugo nominees together, [Bill Rotsler] began to know my face. At Seacon '79, over at Brighton, he beat me out to win his second Hugo, and at



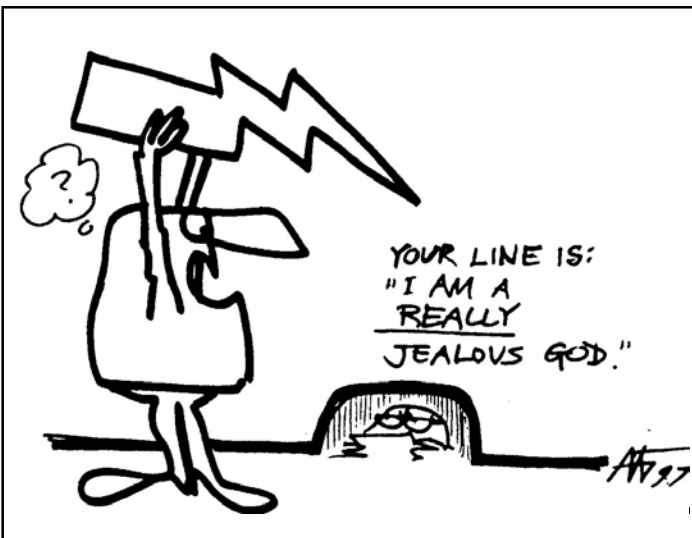
Alexis Gilliland at Chicon V in 1991. Photo by Frank Olynik

some point we were in a hallway together, autographing program books. I was standing downstream from him, and when he began doing little pictures alongside his signature, I began doing little pictures alongside his

little pictures. That is the first time I can remember us doing any sort of collaboration. In the natural course of events, some of the books made their way back to Bill to show him what I was doing to his work. He loved it, and after he got home, he sent me the first of many packages of set-ups, for me to find and develop the jokes concealed within."

Year	Winner/Judges
1998	Steve Stiles Mike Glyer Richard Lynch Geri Sullivan
1999	Grant Canfield
2000	ATom*
2001	Brad Foster
2002	Kurt Erichsen
2003	Ray Nelson (Hertz replaced Lynch)
2004	Harry Bell (Kincaid Speller replaced Sullivan)
2005	Marc Schirmeister
2006	Alexis Gilliland

(* posthumous; after this year S.C.I.F.I. decided not to give posthumous Awards.



Fandom's Tangled Web

Three Centuries of Fanzine Publishing

Really, it's ridiculous how many fanzines have hit the century mark (or will soon) that didn't even exist in 2003. Any moment now suspicious Congressmen will convene a hearing on steroid use by fanzine editors.

Not long ago I got *The Drink Tank* #108, and I know Chris Garcia's first issue just appeared last year (2005).

Then Arnie Katz keeps putting out *Vegas Fandom Weekly*, well, every week. His faithfulness is impressive, but the really shocking thing to anyone familiar with Arnie's history is that he's produced 88 fanzines since 2004 without giving them at least 37 different titles.

Isn't this supposed to be difficult? Heaven knows how long it took me to get to *File 770* #100. Of course, when new fans who've only seen my productivity rate since Sierra was born do the math they must assume the headline story in my first issue was the birth of Hugo Gernsback.

When I joined fandom the genzines with issue numbers over 100 all had been appearing regularly since World War II. Or nearly. *Yandro* started in 1953, the year I was born, and would finish its run with #259 in 1986. Coincidentally, Henry "Knarley" Welch started producing *The Knarley Knews* the same year *Yandro* stopped. No one knew at the time that the torch had been passed, it being so difficult to keep a zine on a regular schedule (or so I've heard, I'm not speaking from firsthand experience).

Henry Welch's enviable consistency, like a mason setting down a brick at a time, yielded the hundredth issue of *TKK* in 2003. This past October he marked his 20th anniversary with *TKK* #120, a special theme issue where he invited everybody to discuss why they publish fanzines. I'm going to do that real soon now. Yes, in the dizzying, MTV-speed world of PDF publishing that may be what I find most reassuring about *TKK*: with its schedule I'm still only six more issues behind in my letterhacking at the end of the year.

Emerald City Shuts Its Gates

Cheryl Morgan ceased publica-

tion of her Hugo-winning review and news publication *Emerald City* with issue #134 in October. Morgan attributed her decision partly to the logistical difficulties created by not having a permanent home. She also noted in a comment appended to someone's LiveJournal that producing the reviewzine and writing her blog for its website were full-time occupations only made possible because she could not find employment, and that they were not remunerative.

Morgan also expressed disillusionment about the quality of her own work and the general usefulness of online book reviews. But she can't have been too disillusioned, since she also commented, apparently without tongue-in-cheek, "I haven't been able to announce it until now because announcing a fold just before the voting deadline would undoubtedly have affected the Hugos and that would never do. (I will, of course, decline any nominations I might receive next year.)"

Emerald City's dominance over the sf book reviewing field was sustained by regular publication of high quality material, and its Best Semiprozine nomination was well-earned. While the fanzine may be ending, here's hoping Cheryl Morgan's fanwriting will continue.

Photo Site Still Recovering

When Chaz Boston Baden's massive photo archive crashed in 2005 fans lost access to

nearly 30,000 images.

Chaz reports now that 40% of the lost pictures have been recovered, and over two-thirds have at least the little thumbnail images back. He still has about seventeen thousand photos to classify and label before all the recovered material is posted.

Fannish donations have paid for professional-grade data recovery work on the hard drive and prepaid two years of professional hosting service. Chaz automatically updates his site every month. He continues shooting new pictures, so the combined number of available photos on his site once again exceeds 20,000, and there are almost thirty thousand with at least thumbnails online.

Changes of Address

Glenn Glazer, 1074 El Solyo Heights Drive, Felton, CA 95018

Saul Jaffe, B3 Greenbriar Ct., Clifton, NJ 07012

Elspeth Kovar, E-mail: ekovar@panix.com
Alexander Slate, 2555 NE Loop 410, #1602, San Antonio TX 78217; Telephone: (210) 687-6633

New York Science Fiction Society - the Lunarians, Inc., Chrysler Building, 132 East 43rd St. #436, New York, NY 10017
Robert Whitaker Sirignano, 5482 Hay Point Landing Road, Smyrna, Delaware 19977

Alex Slate explains: "Just to let everyone know, Laurel and the girls are moving up to

Ohio. We have sold our house here in SA (closing on 29 June) and have bought one in Dayton (closing on 3 July). Laurel and I are not going to be separated (except physically). With the girls starting at Wright State in the fall. It is cheaper for them to move to Dayton, the girls to live at home, and for me to move into an apartment here than it is to pay out of state tuition, room and board. I am actively seeking a job at Wright-Patterson and will move up as soon as possible.

Mark Blackman says this about the Lunarians' new address: "Listing Chrysler Building is optional, but hey - it's prestigious."



Medical Updates

Rusty Hevelin was hospitalized on October 31 after complaining of chest pains and shortness of breath. As reported in Joe Hal-deman's diary on SFFnet, Gay was on the phone with Hevelin at the time, and she told him to go downstairs and call 9-1-1 (he apparently was calling on his cell); he got to the ground floor but collapsed.

Gay kept talking to him while she went down on the street, knocking on doors until she found a neighbor at home, and used the phone to call Dayton 9-1-1 while keeping Rusty on the other line. He gave emergency workers permission to knock the door down. They transported him by ambulance to a local hospital where he was diagnosed with blood clots in his lungs.

Hevelin spent another two weeks in the hospital. Gay reported online that he now is back to his normal life, though they are still working on adjusting his new medications.

Becoming fandom's #1 letterhack **Lloyd Penney** causes more eyestrain than anyone knew. In November an optometrist inspected Lloyd's right eye and discovered the left field of the retina was detached. Lloyd had surgery on December 5 to re-attach the retina. Lloyd posted on Trufen.net, "The ophthalmologist has given me the green light to get back to work and to fanac. My retina is well-reattached, and all should be right in a few weeks."

Tara Barber, Michigan fan and treasurer of the Dorsai Irregulars, had back surgery in June and came through fine.

Barry Gold had a blocked artery corrected by angioplasty in June. He was home after one night in the hospital. **Lee Gold** had a hysterectomy on July 7. No evidence of cancer was discovered. [[Source: *De Profundis* 403]]

Martin Easterbrook, co-chair of the 1995 Worldcon, had successful triple bypass heart surgery this summer.

Eugene's Jerry Oltion Wins 2006 Endeavour Award

Jerry Oltion's novel, *Anywhere But Here*, (Tor), won the eighth Endeavour Award Friday evening at Orycon in Portland. Oltion was a finalist in 2002 and 2005. The Award is accompanied by a \$1,000.00 honorarium and an etched glass plaque by Kent, Wash. artists Ashley Harper. Oltion lives in Eugene, Ore.

The other finalists for 2006 were David Marusek's *Counting Heads* (Tor), C.J. Cherryh's *Destroyer* (DAW), the late Octavia E.

Butler's *Fledgling: A Novel* (Seven Stories Press), and Greg Bear's *Quantico* (Harper Collins UK) Bear's book will be published in North America next year.

The annual Endeavour Award honors a distinguished science fiction or fantasy book, either a novel or a single-author collection of stories, created by a writer from the Pacific Northwest and first published in the year preceding the Award. The Award combines the judging methods used by the two leading awards in the field, using the reader and fan-based judging of the Hugo Awards and the professional-based judging of the Nebula Awards. All entries are read and scored by seven readers randomly selected from a panel of preliminary readers. The five highest scoring books then go to three judges, who are all professional writers or editors. The judges for the 2006 Award were Elizabeth Moon, Lawrence Watt-Evans, and James D. Macdonald.

Award Eligibility and Nomination Deadline to enter books published during 2006 is February 15, 2007. Full information on entering the Award is available on the Endeavour Web site: www.osfci.org/endeavour.

The Endeavour Award is sponsored by Oregon Science Fiction Conventions, Inc. (OSFCI), the organization that sponsors OryCon and other Oregon conventions. OSFCI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation.

Diamandis Wins Heinlein Award

The first Robert A. and Virginia Heinlein Prize was awarded to Dr. Peter H. Diamandis at a dinner and award ceremony on July 7, 2006 at the St. Regis Hotel in Houston, Texas. He received \$500,000, a gold Heinlein Medallion, the Lady Vivamus Sword (as described in Heinlein's book *Glory Road*), and a Laureate's Diploma.

Diamandis is a pioneer and leader in the commercial space arena. In the past 25 years he started more than a dozen leading non-profit and for-profit space organizations. Diamandis is best known as Founder and Chairman of the X Prize Foundation, whose \$10 million Ansari X Prize sparked the birth of the personal spaceflight industry.



2006 HUGO AND CAMPBELL AWARD WINNERS

Best Novel:

Spin by Robert Charles Wilson
(Tor)

Best Novella:

"Inside Job" by Connie Willis
(*Asimov's* January 2005)

Best Novelette:

"Two Hearts" by Peter S. Beagle
(*F&SF* Oct./Nov. 2005)

Best Short Story:

"Tk'tk'tk" by David D. Levine
(*Asimov's* March 2005)

Best Related Book:

Storyteller: Writing Lessons and More from 27 Years of the Clarion Writers' Workshop by Kate Wilhelm (Small Beer Press)

Best Professional Editor:

David Hartwell

Best Professional Artist:

Donato Giancola

Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form:

Serenity, Written & Directed by Joss Whedon. (Universal Pictures/Mutant Enemy, Inc.)

Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form:

Doctor Who "The Empty Child" & "The Doctor Dances" Written by Steven Moffat. Directed, James Hawes. (BBC)

Best Semiprozine:

Locus, edited by Charles N. Brown, Kirsten Gong-Wong, & Liza Groen Trombi

Best Fanzine:

Plokta edited by Alison Scott, Steve Davies & Mike Scott

Best Fan Writer:

Dave Langford

Best Fan Artist:

Frank Wu

John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer:

John Scalzi

Building the Worldcon Committee

by Alex von Thorn

There's a saying: "The next boyfriend always pays." In the process of bidding for and running a Worldcon, some are motivated by a strong desire to not repeat the mistakes that were made by earlier committees they were involved with. (And some people who don't have this motivation really should.) This article discusses how to select a chair and build a committee who might be able to survive, succeed with, and possibly even enjoy the Worldcon they intend to run.

If you are thinking about chairing a Worldcon yourself, this article will not help you. You would need to start taking your Thorazine again, or perhaps you should consider consulting an exorcist. The intended audience here is for people joining or considering a bid committee. Let us further suppose that you are not constrained by political, social, or family obligations, so that you are free to help choose the best person to be chair. The question is how to do that?

Although the time frame of these organizational tasks crosses both the bid phase and the convention phase of the organization, this article does not discuss the process of bidding for or running a convention as such. On the subject of organization, I can recommend the later chapters of *Robert's Rules of Order*, as it has sections on by-laws and process of choosing and replacing officers. By-laws are an important focus of this article, as well as the general political process that will exist within a bid or convention organization.

Organizing the Group

The background here is that some conventions have chosen unqualified chairs, which causes many problems:

- Your chair could end up being an aggressively paranoid power-monger (it's happened), with the effect that committee members will quit and other volunteers will become difficult to recruit.
- Even worse than the fascist demagogue is the chair who can't make a decision, or who tends to agree with the last person who spoke to them. Various people might try to fill the power vacuum here: board members, experienced committee members, even the chair's spouse may become the effective decision-maker. But



At LAcon IV: Kirsten Morrell of Calgary and Marah Searle-Kovacevic trying to cheer up Alex Von Thorn after Chicago lost its '08 Worldcon bid. Photo by Keith Stokes.

the main reason this kind of chair is bad for the convention is that good decisions tend to be made by people who can review the facts and circumstances objectively, while the weak chair will inevitably hear most from the squeaky wheels, from the people who are most emotionally involved with a particular outcome.

- Another bad chair is a certain kind of accountant, the one who has no direct management experience, who are only able to believe in money that they actually have in hand. While finance (as revenue and expenses) is both the wind that drives us and the compass we sail by, a leader has to be someone who believes that tomorrow will come.
- The political hack, who is obsessed by procedure and who only cares about gaining power for themselves and their friends because their self-validation is measured by the weight of their fannish title, is a sure enemy to anybody who thinks that success itself is more important than who gets credit for it.

There are other templates for unqualified convention chairs, but the underlying point is that they have risen to the top in the past, mainly out of apathy or lack of understanding by committee members at the critical formative stage of the group, and we should be looking for ways to discourage or prevent

these people from coming to power at any convention where our own reputations (not to mention the welfare of our fannish communities) are at stake.

The strength of any political decision or organization is derived from the breadth and depth of consultation with the community. Someone chosen at a secret backroom meeting will not have the authority to tell people to do things. "I'm the chair, do it because I say so," is not an argument which persuades many people. Some will reply, "Heck with you, do it yourself then." Others will say, "I have more experience than you, I'm doing it my way." And others will say, "Yes, sir," and then they will completely ignore the instructions they've been given, relying on a committee who will work together to lie to an incompetent chair about what's actually going on in order to keep them out of the way of what needs to get done. Even a great leader chosen by a flawed

process will in some ways have less authority than a mediocre leader chosen by a strong process. The very qualified leader chosen by a flawed process may run into "I respect what you've done in the past, but I think you're going the wrong way, and, like, I didn't vote for you." The less experienced leader can say to people, "I'm doing the best I can, so let's try to make this work." If the concom member knows that a lot of people participated in the selection of the chair, and even they themselves could have stood for the position, then they'll know that the committee isn't likely to overrule or remove the chair over an issue, so the chair's decision will stand.

A strong political process involves broad participation, is open to new input, and is transparent to the membership (i.e. process and results are documented and made available). Posting minutes and by-laws to the group is good; putting them on a web site where non-members can see it is better. Most Worldcons tend to arise from a bid committee with a relatively small number of committed members, but the people recruited later to run the actual convention are also stakeholders in the result, so they will want to see how things are done; they want to know who to talk to if something needs to be changed. Openness itself is a counter-argument to many complaints; anybody who can see the decision process will see how

many people they would need to persuade to change a policy or personnel decision. People are more likely to go along with a decision they don't agree with if they know the majority has considered the issue.

Over the years, some groups have added strange provisions to their by-laws. This has the result that many fans don't want to look at by-laws, they think these are just designed as obscure ways to thwart people, and some by-laws are. However, it is possible to write by-laws that are reasonably clear and comprehensive. It may seem obvious, but a useful way to proceed is to decide what rules you want, and write them down in simple terms. Usually, the tricky part is not figuring the rules, but getting people to agree on them. Compromises add wording, but that's okay. Another point to consider is that the by-laws should be complete. Consider the problems the group is likely to encounter that will involve reference to the by-laws, and make sure the by-laws are reasonably clear on those issues. However, it is only necessary to address real or likely problems. As unanticipated things arise in the future, you can create and add new rules.

It may be useful to have an associated document which explains why certain rules were added; this will help future committee members avoid dismantling a working solution, and it will also help people understand which rules are important and how it was expected they would be implemented when they were needed. *Robert's Rules* has good advice about by-laws, but since the reference book is intended to be useful to a wide range of organizations, it inevitably has more material than you need; cutting-and-pasting is not a good approach here, as editing is required to tailor the reference text to what is actually needed by a specific organization.

Important questions which the by-laws should have answers to are: Who gets to vote? How are officers and directors of the organization chosen? What does the organization allow itself to do? How are the rules changed?

The history of Worldcons shows that some chairs have resigned, some have made their committees so unhappy that there have been efforts to remove them from office, some have even died before the convention date. (Note to those considering becoming a Worldcon chair: not only do you risk your spouse, friendships, day job, financial future, reputation in fandom, and sanity, you may even be risking your life.) This is where by-laws become important.

The WSFS constitution states that a bid must show "the rules under which the Worldcon Committee will operate, including a specification of the term of office of their

chief executive officer or officers and the conditions and procedures for the selection and replacement of such officer or officers." The bid has to have a way to proceed if the chair is not available. In days where the grapevine communicates at the speed of email, complaints about the chair will distribute quickly and widely. The person who puts on a good face at the time of filing may not be able to deliver; unfortunately, sometimes the chair does not recognize their own shortcomings. Any organization should not depend on any individual, so we need to have a way to take the chair out of their position. Again, a transparent process, documented in the by-laws, is useful, and *Robert's Rules* has good suggestions. A two-thirds vote of the membership is recommended for this.

As for the committee as a whole, there are three skill sets which are useful. The first and most important is Worldcon experience. Not that any group can assemble a complete team; the important thing is just to know who to go to for help among the "permanent floating Worldcon committee". The second area is local convention experience. Again, the committee won't have all the jobs covered and doesn't have to. All it needs is a set of contacts among the local consoms to be able to recruit locals when the time comes to recruit. It's also important to be plugged into the grapevine, local and global, to know what people are expecting and to avoid problems before they arise. The third skill set a group needs is the ability to travel, throw parties, and perform the other tasks of bidding, though this article does not address that subject.

The group will inevitably have factions, either involved with various committees or interests, or forming spontaneously around a particular issue. One of the key indicators of a faction is where an interested party pulls their friends in to vote their way, where the friends are clearly motivated more by loyalty than by the issue at hand. When one can identify a faction that is emotionally involved in an issue, ignoring their interest is going to be a bad idea. If you can find a way of conceding an issue to them, make it clear to them that this is a favor; this can be useful in solving problems in the future. If the issue is really something where the faction can't be pacified directly, it's a good idea to find some other point to give them, to avoid bad feelings. However, if a faction starts making multiple demands that aren't in the interest of the con, it may become necessary to shut them down, even removing troublemakers from their roles if they keep putting their small group ahead of the convention as a whole.

Who Should Be Chair

Obviously, the first qualification for someone to become Worldcon chair is that they have not volunteered for the job; they need to be pushed forward. Not every candidate will meet this standard, but the group should look harder at the background and other skills of someone silly enough to actually campaign for this job. After performing this sanity check, one then looks for a fannish resume. It is strongly recommended that a Worldcon chair have chaired at least one local convention, preferably more than once. It really helps if it looks like the chair has paid their dues to the community. Someone who has chaired a local con will know the personalities, be able to bring in some contacts, have at least some understanding of the problem set involved in con-running. Preferably, the Worldcon chair should have a long record of accomplishment; the chair should almost meet the standard criteria for fan guest of honor in terms of length and breadth of service to the community. On the other hand, one should also make sure the person's mental, physical, and financial health can withstand (most of) the pressures of chairing a Worldcon. The chair needs some visible record of accomplishment that demonstrates their ability and their commitment to fandom. If their only involvement has been conrunning, they better have a *lot* of conrunning in their fannish resume.

The con chair should also possess some of the qualities of leadership. One does not insist on Tony Robbins-style neurolinguistic programming (although that stuff does work). As no one can possibly do all the work, the chair needs to understand delegation, of which a key element is trust. This can be hard for people who know how to do things, but a good leader measures their success not from their personal accomplishments, but from what their subordinates do *independently*. A great leader does not prevent their subordinates from failing, they just help them with the consequences and help them learn from the experiences. Telepathy is not required; leaders should not expect results they have not asked for. The leaders shouldn't know everything; they should expect to have some subordinates who know more about certain issues, and the leader should know how to get their subordinates to train them in what they need to know.

For a complex organization, a good leader is more like a watchsmith than a captain of the ship. The organization should run itself under normal conditions; the leader's job is simply to see problems and find people to fix them when they arise. So the leader does need to keep track of what their subordinate's tasks and deliverables are, so

that when things don't get done, the leader can help. This is critical; many Worldcon chairs have simply been overwhelmed by the list of tasks.

The leader needs to be able to listen, and in particular, listen to dissent; it's the complainers who will first see problems that need to be fixed. The leader whose reaction to argument is to argue back is going to shut down input that they need. This is not to suggest that the leader needs to cave in to every demand; this is exactly where an open, transparent process helps the leader justify decisions that need to be made while still receiving input to identify and deal with new problems that need to be dealt with. As such, the leader must also be someone who cares about and respects people. The great leader is the one who finds ways to get value from a wide range of people instead of just relying on their friends. A passable leader finds people who are good at tasks; a good leader finds out what people are good at, a great people helps people discover what they are capable of. A basic understanding of finance, law, and management is helpful. A chair who does not understand both the discipline and the flexibility in a budget is going to make bad decisions.

It's helpful if the chair understands some of the major functions of the convention. Not that the chair should be doing any of the work, but simply so that they can understand the task and discuss things intelligently during meetings. One thing you don't want is a chair who sees a particular department or division function as the priority and the chair function a necessary evil. If someone who is good really wants to run the art show or the masquerade, it might make sense to let them do that, even if it means picking someone a little less qualified to chair the convention as a whole.

For any organization that is too big to sit around a dinner table, the chair needs a personality with some amount of "magic" or "charisma". Fortunately, some of the basics of charisma are understood. Confidence is essential. Not the self-obsession of a fascist or narcissist, but at least the ability to stand up and explain their own position and reasoning is required. The leader must show empathy and be able to listen; again, one does not need to turn committee meetings into group therapy sessions (though this has happened in some concoms), but sometimes a person can't find a way to solve something, and the leader needs to be able to hear what is preventing a subordinate from doing what the organization needs.

Two attributes of charisma that are perhaps poorly understood but at least well known are having a unique skill and having some distinct personality traits. Being able

to fly a jet, write a book, complete a Ph.D., consult for television, produce scientific papers, or whatever, will usually have something interesting to talk to people about. The guy who can pull miracles out of their Rolodex (or PDA equivalent) is really handy. Simply being rich includes a problem-solving ability that can come in useful. Not saying every Worldcon chair has to have their own anime production studio (again, not a hypothetical case), but if a committee member sits back and says "wow, how cool" about the chair once in a while, that creates a level of goodwill that can be applied in other circumstances.

As for unusual personality traits, fortunately, this comes easy to fans. A characteristic clothing accessory, a catchphrase, or better, a distinct cultural or linguistic heritage to draw on, is a plus. One might use Cajun or Yiddish terms, or be able to quote scripture in a way that is generous and helpful; one might even have stories from movies or television to draw on (the con chair who had a Star Trek parable suitable for every occasion commanded the respect of his fannish colleagues; the one who quoted from Thunderbirds was even more striking); one might be a student of Zen or Sufi mysticism. A chair might use pagan magic or precognition to solve problems; one might think they are insane, but if they get results, the committee will learn to tolerate a little madness. Some people describe ordinary human interactions in terms of computer algorithms or astrophysics equations. Even being slightly disreputable can be a distinctive attribute; if someone takes a break to call their parole officer, one would certainly appreciate that they have a depth of experience different from one's own background. (Though probably you want to require more than one signature on checks.) A sense of humor doesn't hurt. For all of these traits, they are only useful if they quietly contribute to the con chair's aura; a personality quirk that gets in the way of the job can quickly make one the wrong choice for chair. Really, though, it doesn't hurt if committee members occasionally roll their eyes and say, "He's doing it again." It means that the chair is memorable and that the committee member will be able to immediately put the chair into a context. Some very successful Worldcons have had very quirky chairs.

Dealing with Problems

Every convention chair faces moments where they think to themselves, "Why am I doing this? I don't need this!" In speaking to various convention chairs about how often they considered resigning, "About once a month," was the most common answer. Some answered, "Usually right after meet-

ings," or "About an hour or two into reading committee e-mail each night," or "We can quit? What a good idea..." In practice, the most common reasons for a chair's resignation are loss of family member, job, or health. These are problems generally outside the concom's control, so one must have a mechanism for dealing with the situation. The clearest resolution is to have a vice-chair who simply steps into the spotlight. If the vice-chair is well-known and respected by the committee, then the transition goes smoothly (except for the occasional hapless soul forced to chair a second Worldcon). If one doesn't have this person in place, then the by-laws must be invoked to select a new chair. One good solution is doing what political parties do: select a senior committee member or division head who is respected but not quite at the level to become chair and have them serve as acting chair during the selection period.

A common solution is to have the board of directors select a replacement; often the by-laws specify exactly this resolution. Whatever process is used, one must remember the basic organizing principles of democracy, openness, and transparency: the more controversy that is likely to be stirred up, the more open the process needs to be. Having a chair chosen by a little-known inner circle is going to create problems in terms of getting anything done; questions will be raised about the chair's skills and agenda.

One problem that afflicts every committee at one point in time or another is the flame war. Two or more opposing factions may have irreconcilable positions on some critical issue (at least one con argued extensively about the color of bunting in the exhibit halls). The chair has to have a way to shut down argument when it becomes unproductive (or at least within a week of the debate going sour). It may be a simple matter of "please take this off the list," but sometimes that's not enough. Again, the by-laws can help here. The chair may have to say, "This is what we're doing. Anybody who wants my head can bring this up at the AGM." If people know the debate will be fair, they'll look at the process and decide whether to take this step. (Usually, if they know how to count, they'll either make sure they have support or they'll withdraw the complaint.) Sometimes it's important to remind people that it's just for one year; people who want to do it another way can convince the next Worldcon. Ultimately, the chair can't stop rumors or dissent; the most that can be accomplished is keeping such off the convention mailing lists.

Sometimes, members of a committee feel that the chair isn't doing the job, and they

decide the chair needs to be replaced. This is really where the time invested in creating a solid process in the by-laws will pay off. With an open, democratic, and fair process two things will happen. First, the discussion about replacing the chair can be reasonably civilized, if people do need to talk about it. Second, in most cases, people who want to replace the chair will find out how many votes they need, and they'll do a count before requesting a special meeting. If the dissenting parties can put together a sufficient majority, the vote *per se* may not be necessary; sometimes the chair will read the cards and find a way to resign gracefully. While this seems obvious, the converse is also important. If the chair (or other senior officers or directors) are able to use political tactics to protect their positions against a majority sentiment, then the legitimacy of the convention leadership will suffer and the convention will become much more difficult to manage. And any blame for problems will then fall squarely on the chair's shoulders.

Have a Great Con

So the important things to remember are: the by-laws should be written to solve problems that may come up. Having an open and democratic process is key to being open to solutions, to gaining support for decisions, and to avoid backroom maneuvering that will distract people from working on the convention. If you care about what's going to happen at the con, you should make the effort to become a voting member at an early stage, when the door to joining is wide open. A committee is accountable to the fan community at large, but the fan community in turn has a responsibility to monitor the convention and hold it accountable. The chair's job is to help make it possible for other people do their jobs, sometimes to weigh decisions, to balance the demands of different factions, occasionally to contribute a little of their own talents. We don't have to agree on every question to be able to agree to work together, and picking the right people to be in charge is one of the best guarantees of a good experience for both committee and attending members of the convention.

++ Alex Von Thorn

Capclave (Silver Spring Hilton, October 20-22, 2006)

By Martin Morse Wooster

WSFA continued its goal of making its annual convention into a fall version of Readercon with this year's Capclave. I never saw an account of convention attendance, but

there were 287 pre-registered members, so I estimate attendance in the 300-400 person range. Falling gas prices and high quality program items ensured that Capclave is becoming more of a regional convention than it was; there were enough Philadelphia fans so that they could hold a Philcon party, and I also noticed many attendees from New England. Kansas City had a strong presence for their bid parties, while Montreal's bid was more anemic.

GoH Kim Stanley Robinson, who lived in the Washington area for a few years and who has set novels here, was a very accessible GoH. He gave a 90 minute talk about his goals for saving the planet, Far better, Robinson argued, to spend your leisure time doing things that were free—walking, being with your friends, arguing with your neighbors at community meetings—then wasting money on conspicuous consumption. He urged listeners to be as thrifty as possible and to work with other people in your community for political change.

Colleen Cahill, who is the Library of Congress's chief science fiction person, gave an entertaining talk about librarything.com, a web site that allows users to compile lists of their libraries and share them with other book lovers. There are also newsgroups for librarything.com members to argue about their favorite books and to post reviews. It seemed like an entertaining massive time sink to me; don't we all belong to enough newsgroups as it is? Still, I enjoyed learning about it.

There was also news about the mighty WSFA fan feud. Alexis Gilliland, miffed about not even being invited to be on a panel at Capclave, spent his time skulking and circulating a five-page document that indicted the incredible conspiracy that gave him the boot from WSFA. This might well be the most slanderous and inflammatory one-shot since Harlan Ellison kneed the mad dogs in the groin. Merely to mention a sin-

gle one of Alexis's charges might well land *File 770* in court. Indeed, speculation was rampant at the con as to which one of the conspirators would launch a libel suit (particularly since two of the four plotters were lawyers.)

In Passing

David Stewart (1960-2006)

David Stewart died October 12 from cancer of the esophagus. An Irish smof, Stewart helped organize several Octocons, Irish National SF Conventions. I remember never having heard of Octocon til it was its twelfth year when David Stewart became its publicist and made up for lost time by sending me a whirlwind of press releases. He performed a similar service for the 2005 Worldcon, Interaction, and served as their the Irish agent.

Stewart worked as a freelance journalist specializing in technology issues. *Medicine Weekly* published his technology column, and he also wrote for the *Irish Independent*, *Business Plus*, and *ComputerScope*.

Stewart was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1960. During his life he resided in various parts of Ireland (also Belgium), at the last in Dublin.

Stewart's family has asked a friend to sell his collection of books to raise money for the Oesophageal Cancer Fund.

John Miesel

John Miesel, husband of author Sandra Miesel, passed away August 30 of a brain tumor. He was also a fan and belonged at one time to the Indianapolis Science Fiction Association (ISFA), which in its day included the Coulsons, deWeeses, Dick Lupoff, and Joe Sanders. Sandra Miesel wrote afterwards, "[John] spent [his] last five weeks in a hospice where he received wonderful and loving care. I thank everyone for their prayers during his illness. It was less than five months but it seemed like five years." Jerry Kaufman commented on trufen.net, "He had a droll sense of humor that must have been one of the things he and Sandra had in common. They meshed so well." Another ISFA member from its glory days, Lee Anne Lavell, said of John: "He was lovely, gentle man and although I have not seen him for a very long time I know he will be missed by friends and family."

Photograph of David Stewart.



Tadao's Latest Credit

Add to all the reasons to like NBC's "Heroes" that fandom's working actor Tadao Tomomatsu appeared on the second episode, broadcast on October 2.

"Heroes" follows an array of characters with newly-discovered superpowers. One of them is Hiro Nakamura, an office worker in Tokyo, who develops an ability to manipulate time and space.

In the second episode of "Heroes" broadcast by NBC on October 2, Tomomatsu played Detective Furukawa, a Japanese-speaking NYPD detective, who questions Hiro after he is found at a crime scene holding a gun.

Coincidentally, Hiro and Tadao are both avid fans of superheroes and science fiction. But only Tadao has been eaten by Godzilla!



Photos: (Left) A screenshot of Tadao Tomomatsu as Detective Furukawa. (Right) Actor Masi Oka plays Hiro.



L.A.CON IV BEGINS PASSING ALONG WORLDCON SURPLUS

[[From the committee's press release.]]

L.A.con IV, the 64th World Science Fiction Convention, is quickly working through the mountains of paperwork and bookkeeping that goes with bringing a modern Worldcon to a close.

Among the challenges for any convention is to figure out what revenues above expenses it has - if any - and what to do with them. Under a voluntary program in place since 1989, one of the things done is to pass along at least 50% of your surplus to the next three Worldcons, to help make future Worldcons financially secure and to see that such revenues go to the benefit of Fandom. Since that time, all Worldcons save one have participated in the Pass-Along Funds program.

In addition to passing along funds to future Worldcons, 1996's L.A.con III also used its surplus to make large donations to TAFF and DUFF (the Fan Funds that help deserving fans travel between North America and the UK and between the UK and Australia); sponsored Handicapped Services, free coffee in the convention center, and other services at the 2002 Worldcon in San Jose; and to a wide variety of other worthy fannish causes.

L.A.con IV received Pass-Along Funds from Torcon 3 (2003), Noreascon 4 (2004), and Interaction (2005). This money, coming early in the planning process, allowed for better fiscal decision making and for a number of discretionary but beneficial projects to be undertaken for the convention and its attendees.



Christian McGuire, chair of L.A.con IV. Photo by Keith Stokes.

While some bills are yet to be presented in final form and some expenses still need to be submitted, we can see the light at the end of our financial tunnel. L.A.con IV is pleased to announce we will be able to pass substantial amounts on to the next three Worldcons.

At SMOFcon 24 in Kansas City, Missouri, over the weekend of December 1-3,

2006, L.A.con IV - in the persons of Chairman Christian McGuire and Vice Chairmen Craig Miller and Bobbi Armbruster - presented checks for \$25,000 to representatives of Nippon2007 and Denvention 3, the 2007 and 2008 Worldcons. The Chairman of each convention, Hiroaki Inoue and Kent Bloom, were present and accepted the checks for their conventions. An equal amount is being held to be given to the 2009 Worldcon committee, once the group hosting that convention is selected at next year's Worldcon.

It's likely that additional funds will be given to each of the three Worldcons in the future, once the complete financial picture for L.A.con IV is clear. But the convention's Executive Committee felt that picture was clear enough that this amount could be given without fear of any future difficulties. And when planning a Worldcon (or any convention), money in hand is always welcome, the sooner the better.

Among the items waiting to close for L.A.con IV are a final list of convention volunteers and several small to medium bills. L.A.con IV hopes to close its active books within 90 days.

For more details on the convention, please go to the convention's website at <http://www.laconiv.org>.

For details on Southern California Institute for Fan Interests, Inc. (SCIFI), the 2006 convention's parent organization, please go to

<http://www.scifiinc.org>.

**Corflu 23, May 5-7, 2006,
Comfort Hotel Downtown,
Toronto, Canada.**

Perhaps it was a sign of how far I've wandered from the centres of power and influence that I first learned of a Corflu in Toronto from a fanzine coming out of Texas or Louisiana. For months I only knew it was going to be here. There was a little grumbling from other quarters about the lack of information from the con-com, but I've grown philosophical about such things. If I knew more, someone might want me to *do* something...

Gradually, in spite of myself, I was drawn into Corflu.

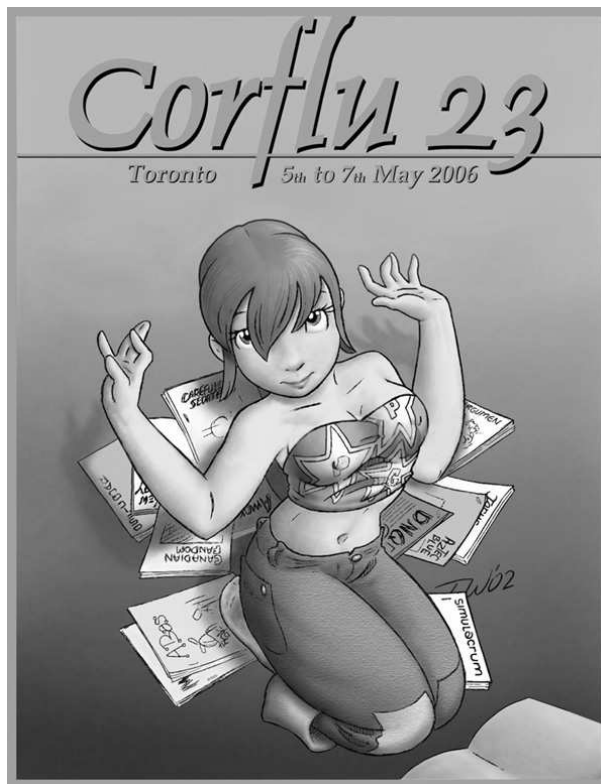
Murray Moore spoke to me about it a few months later. While professing little knowledge of the inner workings of the con, he was interested in doing special publications for the con. His first idea was reproduce a zine I originally published in 1988 for the very first Ditto. He asked if I had the original masters, but later I had a better idea. I'd scan the pages. In fact, why bother actually *printing them*? Almost any way he could name would cost more. I suggested we produce a CD-Rom instead.¹ And so we did, though I'm getting a bit ahead of myself.

Fast forward to May 6th this year. Although urged to drop in Friday (the 5th), I had been working right up until Thursday on last minute editing and Photoshop files. I pled exhaustion and a desire to vegetate in front of the TV for a day before I was up to socializing.

I arrived Saturday, shortly after lunchtime and just about when the schedule said the program was to begin. I walked in on a panel of Woman's Apa veterans talking about the early days of the apa. Janet Wilson did most of the talking, I seem to recall, with comments from Pat Virzi and possibly Geri Sullivan. While wide-awake, I paid this less attention than I suppose I ought to've, but having trouble hearing Janet's soft-spoken talk made it difficult. (I've never been fond of listening to panels for this reason.) The small audience seemed more attentive than I, and ultimately rewarded the panellists with applause.

A small audience because there were

¹ No doubt my inspiration came of my undertaking a long-term project to archive the entire run of *Energumen*, to press on CD-Rom later this year.



CORFLU 23-SKIDOO
by Taral Wayne

only 26 fans attending. Three or four were on the panel and a few others were no-where to be found, possibly in their room or still wandering Toronto's main drag. Earlier that morning I gather there were walking tours.

The next item on the program, according to the easel in the corner of the room, was a demonstration of on-stencil technique. Colin and Catharine had out-done themselves providing every sort of mimeo equipment – two mimeos, an electrostenciler, oodles of corflu of course, also letter guides, stencil styluses, and shading plates – specifically a genuine Gestetner light table Colin borrowed from me. (I use it as a drawing table... never mind wax stencils.) At first it seemed no one wanted to sit down and start scraping wax. Geri Sullivan claimed an interest, but said she knew nothing about it, so finally Ted White took the seat, picked up a stylus, and began tracing one of the drawings brought by Andy Porter for auction. Greg Trend took Ted's place next, and gradually other people took their turns. Gradually, a number of dark green stencils were filled up, to be snatched by Geri for

possible future use.

It seems that the agenda item after that was ignored. I recall most people wandering up to the con suite or just hobnobbing around the program room after that. Soon it was the dinner hour, people drifting out of the hotel in small groups.

Once most had drifted back again, the program continued with a somewhat controversial slide-show. The first part featured photos of British fandom. Next, a selection of Victoria Vayne's old photos of Toronto fans from the mid-seventies. Victoria had no objection to showing the slides, but made it clear she wouldn't attend herself. It fell to me to narrate since many of the photos were more than a little obscure. Most of the faces and places Janet Wilson could have named, but shots taken in the Great Smokey Mtns. Or Badlands of South Dakota were another matter. Just why they were there must have been a bit of a mystery to the audience. Mike Glicksohn should have narrated the third part of the slide show, but unfortunately the projector decided to jam and then break down at that moment. End of program for Saturday.

Of course, what people had really come to Corflu for was the evening party. The con suite was well stocked with party food ranging from the healthful to downright decadent, and for those who must indulge there was a second "smoking" room. I can't comment on what other people talked about, but recall several vivid conversations I participated in personally. I especially enjoyed having a chance to renew old acquaintances with Ted White, Art Widner, and Andrew Porter. While I'd be hard pressed to remember much of the conversation now, one long talk I had with Ted about old times, the Bergeron boondoggle, Winton Marsalis, and the tame response of fandom to the possibilities of digital publishing, sticks in my memory. Andy Porter talked mostly about my missing teeth and making a will, it seemed. I remember mainly faces. I know I spoke to Yvonne Rowse briefly, and probably exchanged more than a few words with Frank Lunney. I at least took note of Randy Byers and Ben Zuhl. And of course the usual Gang of Idiots from home were hard to avoid.²

Around 3 a.m. though I decided I couldn't keep my eyes open much longer. Catharine and Colin had kindly offered me the use

of the smoking room, now empty, and aired out by the open windows. I gratefully turned in. There was an amusing little story about getting up next morning, involving the maid and a tin of “Peek Freens”, but after telling this anecdote to a small number of people later, Colin & Catharine said they preferred if I refrained. I’m gambling that I’ve said *just* enough about this, but not *too* much...

Sunday of course, is the day for the heavy-duty program. To build strength for the ordeal to come, there is a brunch or lunch at the start. As it happened the hotel had quite a nice Japanese restaurant in the same building. The con organizers had reserved a long row of tables in a back room, and arranged a choice of menu – chicken, salmon, or veggie. Several of the con members hadn’t eaten Japanese before, but if any found it less than an appetizing treat, I didn’t notice.

First order of business once everyone was back in the fifth floor program room was to organize the customary baseball game. Murray was particularly eager to hit the turf, pound leather, sock pigskin or whatever it is one does in this game. But the average weight of the fans in the room must have been approaching 250, even with the skinnies³, and everyone had just come back from a heavy meal. The notion was just about unanimously voted down.

It developed that the slide projector had been fixed. Mike had his chance to narrate after all. The “controversy” I mentioned about the photos is more a question in my mind than in anyone else’s I think. I ask

corflu 23

MAY 5, 6, 7, 2006



NO IMAGE OF THE PROPHET IN THIS ONE, GANG!

myself what fannish slide shows are for. To the extent they show photos of fans you know, what interest is there in seeing a series of mug shots? On the other hand, if you don’t know the fan in the photograph, what would you care? The best argument I can come up with is that there are usually fans that most know only by reputation, but have never met. (Like say Richard Bergeron.) Another possibility would be photographs of unusual intrinsic interest. Such as Andy Hooper being pied by Marty Cantor. But maybe all this is just me over-thinking the

issue. So far as I could tell, people enjoyed the pictures or were at least very polite about it if they didn’t.

Next it was time for the guest of honour to speak. This is apparently a hoary old tradition, dating back to the first Corflu in the Neo-Mimeolithic Era. Of all people, the name drawn from the hat (or jar) the day before was Hope Leibowitz. I had noticed her scribbling on a notepad in the con suite, at the tenderest hours of the a.m., and wondered what she was up to. Apparently she had been writing a GoH speech. I don’t normally think of Hope as a fan writer. She has written locs, but could never be called prolific. Her speech though was really quite entertaining. I’m not sure I can remember just what it was about --the memory comes up with a few remarks about friendship that were amusing enough, and obviously heartfelt.

It came time to choose the next Past President of the Fanzine Writers of America. This seems to be Ted White’s prerogative. I don’t know how it came about, but I suppose it saves on paper ballots. Ted had made no secret the night before who he would “elect” – it was Mike Glicksohn. Given the problems Mike has had with his health in recent months, it seemed like a well-timed gesture.

Ballots had been given out sometime Saturday, though it seems not many people got them or filled them out. (At least I never got one to cast my vote.) Not surprisingly, best Fan Artist fell to Steve Stiles, who had provided Corflu with that year’s T-Shirt. (Dan Steffan was runner up.) Best Fanzine must have been a tight race too, but the winner was *Banana Wings* (my current favourite). Best Letter hack went to Bob Lichtman. I believe Best Fanwriter and Best New Fan were both British, but unfortunately I cannot remember who was announced.

Very likely I was busy staging a fake photo with Paul Wilson, at that precise moment...⁴

A site was chosen for next year’s Corflu. As it appears to be a tradition not to have competing “bids”, the selection of Pat Virzi and Austin came as no great surprise. Start



Corflu 23, Toronto May 6 2006

² A much-loved phrase adapted from the credits of *Mad Magazine* in the Good Old Days. Among the Usual were Mike Glicksohn, Hope of course, Colin & Catharine naturally, Murray Moore, Janet Wilson I’ve mentioned, her son Paul, Phil Paine, and Lloyd Penny.

³ Pat Virzi is still a hottie.



Toronto the Ghood

The Corflu 23 Edition . Produced exclusively for the members of Corflu , held in Toronto May 5th. to 7th. 2006, this CD samples some of the best fanwriting from this city over

a period of 50 years, from the 1930's to the 1980's. Special features include Taral Art Folio, Toronto Fan Photos, Cuff & Ditto Reports, Gallery of Energumen Covers, First republication of "Dissenting" by Gardner R. Dubious, "AI: My, Oh, My!" by Robert J. Sawyer, "8 Random Thoughts" by Robert C. Wilson, and Corflu 23 Posters & T-Shirt Art.

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Please note that Toronto the Ghood was not used outside and all
 of those things are from 2006. This is printed for
 historical events. They are not all, you should not believe
 all items printed in the CD-ROM are correct as of May 2006.



Contributors include: Beak Taylor, P.Howard Lyons, Boyd Raeburn, Peter Gill, Susan Wood, Rosemary Ulyot, Mike Glicksohn, Victoria Vayne, Bob Wilson, Janet Wilson, Phil Paine, Taral Wayne, & Bob Webber, as well as Special Contributor Steve Stiles. Produced by Corflu 23, edited and redesigned for CD-Rom by Taral Wayne.

brushing up on your Texican. Bringing a secret recipe for BBQ sauce or chilli is optional.

Geri Sullivan announced that the number of people "attending" Corflu with their virtual presence on-line outnumbered the live bodies by about three to one.

The program wrapped up with a prolonged auction. I sat through most of it, and watched copies of old fanzines, previous Corflu t-shirts, and left over contributions to Science Fiction Chronicle auctioned off. There was even a Minnesota license plate – MPLS 73 or something very close.

Sunday night's dead-dog party was no less substantial and satisfying than Saturday's party. I seem to recall few actual conversations, but Hope espousing the joys of Pocky stick in my mind for some reason. I'd heard of Pocky. In Japan it's a popular junk food, and I knew of it because the advertising usually has a scantily clothed anime style girl prominently featured. If someone had suggested I would ever eat Pocky, though, I might have scoffed. But there were several kinds at the con. The green tea flavoured variety was at least innocuous. One seemed to resemble a Jurassic club moss, and tasted just the way I imagine an extinct species of swamp moss would. Given a choice, I'd

rather a chocolate covered pretzel stick, thanks! Any culture that thinks bean curd is candy, or seaweed a cookie, isn't qualified to make proper junk food either.

I've been told the Dead Dog lasted until quite late... or quite early depending on your point of view. But I had a cat that hadn't been fed overnight. I was tired. So I chose to leave around dinnertime.

A few words should be said about Corflu's publishing ambitions. Although a program book had been planned, time ran out and Colin reluctantly abandoned it, deciding correctly that an easel in the program room would serve just as well. The material collected for the program book won't go to waste. He plans to produce a "memory" book instead, to mail to all members later. Corflu had better luck with its t-shirt. On request, Steve Stiles produced a characteristically fannish piece that was printed white on black and available in the usual range of fannish sizes – L to XXXL. I'm happy to say that I had equal luck putting together a

CD-Rom. (Neatly tying the end of this con report, finally, to its beginning.) Rather than mimeograph or Xerox *Toronto the Ghood*, why not give it out as a disk? I had the means to scan the paste-ups of the original zine, and save them in Adobe PDF format that anyone could open either to read on their monitor, or print out just as the original looked. It would actually be cheaper, as well as easier to produce.

The original was mimeographed (on twilight yet) for Ditto 1, in 1988. For it, I collected samples of Toronto fanwriting ranging from the 1930's to the 1980's. The Corflu 23 reprints the collection in entirety, and adds a number of special features – photos, art, and additional writings – all packaged as prettily as the latest Star Wars in its own illustrated jewel case. No Jar Jar Binks, guaranteed! Members who didn't pick one up at the con will be mailed theirs. At this writing it seems likely it may also be made available for ten bucks to raise money for an appropriate fan fund, TAFF being the leading candidate.

And with that bit of hopefully not too blatant bit of self-promotion, I bid the fannish reader adieu.

⁴ Paul is the oldest son of Robert Charles Wilson, who it seems might be following in the old man's footsteps by dabbling in fandom. .

FILE 770

OBITUARIES

Fern Tucker

Fern Tucker, beloved wife of Wilson "Bob" Tucker, passed away on June 6, 2006. She had cancer and was at home receiving hospice care. All of her family were with her. SFWA President Robin Wayne Bailey posted online "We met only a handful of times, but she was always charming and gracious. She was never really a fan, herself, but she allowed us to share the man who is the heart and soul of fandom to many. And that, alone, made her a very special woman."

Fern Tucker

Appreciation by Ken Keller

I met Fern Tucker only twice. The first time was at the summer of 1974 at MidWestCon while KC was in the final stages of (successfully) bidding for the '76 Worldcon. Back then, she and Bob had their hands full with their teen kids, who had come with them to Midwest fandom's oldest relaxacon. Fern was very gracious during that weekend but uninterested in fandom. Early in the con, she was present when I pulled Bob aside and asked him if he'd be the Toastmaster of the 34th Worldcon -- should we win. Bob, I suspect, knew this was coming -- he was a major supporter of the KC bid. He thought about it, looked over at Fern, then finally said "yes" after something unspoken passed



Fern & Bob Tucker. Photograph by Carol Doms.

between them. It would be yet another weekend that fandom would "steal" Bob away from her, but Fern was fine with it. That was gracious, indeed!

I met Fern one final time several years ago in Bloomington, IL, as did a whole large group of Bob's fannish friends. The event was a big Tucker birthday celebration con organized by Keith Stokes, Roger Tener, and Jimmy Hollaman. That weekend also became a celebration of Fern's and Bob's long marriage -- all their immediately family was in attendance from around the country. Fern had a great time over that two-day event and was very charming to everyone. That weekend was also a "Thank You," of sorts, to Fern for letting us (fandom) steal Bob away so many times over decades for uncounted lost weekends. I introduced my wife Terry (Matz) to her, and then explained how Bob, acting as a matchmaker in '77, was the person responsible for our being a couple. Later, I also thanked her for letting me "borrow" Bob for that long ago KC Worldcon. During the weekend, Fern came to know the spirit of fannish fellowship that had attracted the rest of us to fandom and, of course, to Bob as one of its leading lights and good will ambassadors. It was a terrific weekend that in light of Fern's passing I'm so happy I now attended.

[[Originally appeared on Trufen.net]]

Bob Tucker

Soon following his wife in death, Bob Tucker passed away October 6 at the age of 91. Bob was with his daughter Judy in Florida. He had been hospitalized for about four days.

Arthur Wilson "Bob" Tucker by John Hertz

His father was a circus man, with Ringling Bros. and with Barnum & Bailey; he was a motion-picture projectionist and a stage



Tucker at the mimeo in the 1940s. Photographer unknown. From Toni Weisskopf collection.

electrician. Visiting Los Angeles for the 1946 World Science Fiction Convention, he dropped by the union hall to ask if there was work, and spent six months at 20th Century Fox, a name which could not have been more suitably chosen. His name was Arthur Wilson, but somehow we called him Bob; somehow he called himself Hoy Ping Pong, too. I tried to get the local Hoy Ping Benevolent Association to make him an honorary member.

His first fanzine was *The Planetoid* (1932); the most celebrated, *Le Zombie*; first appearance of Pong, *The Fantasy Fan* (1933). Arthur Wilson "Bob" Tucker (1914-2006) published a million words of fanwriting. As another hobby he published sf and mysteries; of his first novel, *The Chinese Doll* (1946), he later said "Tony Boucher paid me the highest compliment of my writing career; he wished he had written it"; there and elsewhere so many characters had fans' named that putting one's friends into one's books came to be called tuckerizing.

Toni Weisskopf has the best picture of him, in a sweater and tie, rolled-up striped shirt-sleeves, and a pipe, printing fanzines covers at a mimeograph, behind him wallpaper and pin-ups. Okay, the pin-ups aren't pinned up, they're framed. So is the monster. This is the picture in the Harry Warner, Jr. history of fandom during the 1950s, *A Wealth of Fable* (1992); since it shows Tucker during the 1940s, Joe Siclari put it in his posthumous edition of Warner's first volume of history, *All Our Yesterdays*

(1969, rev. 2004). Tucker wrote the introductions to both those unequaled books. He coined the phrase “space opera”, which is meant pejoratively – he also thought Warner, who loved classical music, had a marked weakness for opera. Bruce Gillespie put the picture in *SF Commentary* 79, the Tucker issue, also the wonderful Diane & Leo Dillon cover for Tucker’s 1970 sf novel *The Year of the Quiet Sun*.

The comedian Red Skelton, son of another circus man, in a mock television advertisement promoted a fictitious brand of gin. He said it was smooth. Tucker drank Jim Beam bourbon. That was smooth. He got us all saying so. On his way to Melbourne for the 1975 Worldcon he got a whole airplane going “Smooooth.” He had never flown before. A conspiracy of women, including Joni Stopa, brought him there. Next year at Kansas City he was Toastmaster, with Pro Guest of Honor Robert A. Heinlein, Fan Guest of Honor George Barr. We knew the man who could introduce them could introduce Warner.

He brought us the Society for the Prevention of Wire Staples in Scientifiction Magazines and a *Neofan’s Guide* and the Tucker Hotel. The Society brought us the staple war and a hoax that he had died. There were more of those; Art Rapp in *Spacewarp* published a calendar with September 8-15 as Tucker Death Hoax Week. The Hotel was supposed to move from one con to the next; he told us “Save your roller skates”; people started mailing him bricks, and at least one Bible scholar sent straw, with which Tucker eventually built a cathouse. He discovered that the center of the universe was a bar in Columbus, Georgia. He had an endless two-man act with Bob Bloch. He lost at a pun contest to Harlan Ellison and at poker to Sprague de Camp’s teenage son. Of himself he said he was a greedy reader; he went round the neighborhood gathering news, then trying to sell it to the people who’d given it to him; he prized Frederik Pohl’s advice, “If a character is walking down the street to mail a letter, don’t describe the street and the mailbox before he leaves the house”; he liked the 1938 film of *Pygmalion*, with Leslie Howard and Wendy Hiller. At the time he arrived, said Weisskopf, the bright possibilities were infinite, but only certain people could have seen what that meant. He was Fan Guest of Honor at the 1948 and 1967 Worldcons. He was given the Big Heart Award in 1962. He won the Campbell Memorial Award and three Hugos for fanwriting and in



Photo of **Judith Ward**, 1932– 2006.

2003 was placed into the Science Fiction Hall of Fame. He is survived by children and grandchildren. He had the grace to live past September. I drank a shot of Jim Beam. *R.I.P. [[Reprinted by permission from Vana-monde 704]]*

Richard Eney

Richard Harris Eney died December 22. He was 69 years old. Tamar Lindsay, married to Dick since 1993, posted online, “Dick had a stroke, apparently one of a series that had passed unnoticed because the symptoms were atypical until the one last night. The doctors at Prince George’s Hospital operated to remove the clot, but the complications that followed were untreatable.” She advised his friends to please make a donation to charity in lieu of sending flowers.

Judith Ward (1932-2006)

Texas fan Judith Ward died at the age of 61 on July 3, one day before her birthday. She died of congestive heart failure.

Years ago I met Judith for the first time during an LA in ’90 worldcon bid party at

Armadillocon. Her irascible temper and the outsider’s eye for details about things in local fandom she felt excluded from made her fascinating to talk to. She seemed to know everybody in Texas fandom and if it had been up to her they’d have all presupposed us that night. At the same time she was also trying to line up every potential Hugo nominator for Sherlock, her favorite fanartist. Both causes lost to other candidates in the short run, but fans can learn a lot by remembering Judith’s model of persistence. LA eventually did win a Worldcon. Sherlock was nominated for Best Fan Artist Hugo at LoneStarCon 2. I’ve even read that Judith served a stint as chair of the Fandom Association of Central Texas

in the late 1990s – so much for being an outsider.

Health problems, especially diabetes, had long since reduced her to moving about in a wheelchair, something she proved need not be any barrier to working on conventions – willingly or not. Early at LoneStarCon 2, when Judith Ward rolled by she demanded of everyone listening, “Didn’t I tell you that I wouldn’t run the Con Suite?” Ed Wilson, a fan attending the con from Qatar, answered her rhetorical question, “So, you’re running the Con Suite?” Judith snarled, “Yes!”

Prior to her death Ward had been selected **Fen Guest of Honor** for FenCon III in September 2006 and in the tradition of fandom the committee celebrated her as such even after her passing.

Leigh Anne Hussey

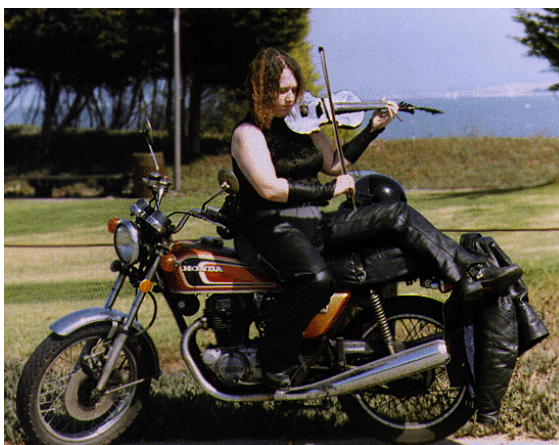
Berkeley fan Leigh Anne Hussey died the evening of May 16 when she lost control of her motorcycle and fell under the back wheels of a dump truck on the I-580. Investigators were unclear what caused the accident. Witnesses said the truck was in the slow lane and had not been changing lanes.

Hussey, 44 years old, was active in many social worlds of the Bay Area such as music, motorcycles and the internet, several of which intersected in interesting combinations like the “Denizens of Doom”, an early internet faux motorcycle club that actually ended up doing a lot of interesting events. Among sf fans she was a well-known member of the Society for Creative Anachronism, a noted pagan, and a worker on local Mythcons in the 1980s.

David Bratman remembered her invaluable contributions to the 1988 Mythcon in a Livejournal post (quoted by permission):

“After Ursula K. Le Guin’s *Always*

Photograph of **Leigh Anne Hussey**.



Coming Home was published [Leigh Anne] became a devoted fan of the book and a remarkable expert in Kesh culture, particularly its music and drama: so much so that when we held Mythcon again in 1988 with Le Guin as GoH and I chaired, I appointed Leigh Ann entertainments coordinator under the title 'Kesh consultant' and let her rip. Le Guin was fascinated by our plans, which resulted in one committee meeting where I handed the astonished Leigh Ann a slip of paper with a phone number on it and said, 'Ursula wants you to call her.'

"Leigh Ann threw herself into this Mythcon as she had the previous one. With her then-husband David Oster (whom I think she had first met at that previous Mythcon) she designed Kesh-style name badges, made Kesh musical instruments and led the opening procession with them, helped Todd Barton lead the chanting of heya, and put on a production of a short play from the book, 'The Plumed Water,' a ritual celebrating the Calistoga geyser. On the day after the con, a number of us rented a small van and toured the Valley of the Na, the book's setting. Leigh Ann was our party's expert in all the local botany as well as Kesh lore. We finished up at the geyser and found it, luckily for us, erupting. This is not Old Faithful where you have to keep a quarter-mile away; you can go right up to this geyser and stand under the fringes of the spray. Unusually, the geyser kept on going, and Leigh Ann pulled out a copy of *Always Coming Home* and quickly organized another whole reading of the play. The geyser didn't stop until after we were finished."

Darrell C. Richardson

Darrell C. Richardson died on September 19 at the age of 88 after a long illness. He was a minister and writer, especially known among collectors for his extensive holdings of works and materials related to Edgar Rice Burroughs. He is estimated to have owned over 30,000 books, 20,000 pulp magazines and many hundreds of related items, in over twenty languages.

Richardson was active in Cincinnati fandom from the late 1940s until he went into the Army as a chaplain in the 1950s. He encountered Elvis Presley in 1956 when they were both serving in Germany. Richardson described his celebrity brush for a Memphis newspaper in 2005:

"Late one night I arrived in my Jeep after visiting soldiers in the field. My driver stopped to let me out at the entrance of the club. As I stepped out of my Jeep, unbeknownst to me, another Jeep pulled alongside. The driver stepped out with his back to me and accidentally stepped on my foot. He jumped back, saluted me and quickly apolo-

gized. It was Elvis Presley! After a brief conversation, we went our separate ways."

He spent over twenty years as a pastor in Kentucky. He retired as Editor of the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention in Memphis.

As Mike Resnick recalled in a tribute posted online: "Darrell was a Baptist preacher, and a sincere one. He contracted cancer a quarter of a century ago. The doctors administered chemo, explained that it would cause his hair to fall out, and gave him five weeks to live. He had a pow-wow with Jesus that night, they decided he still had preaching to do, and the next morning he started growing a beard. He was out of the hospital and pronounced miraculously cured after a month (he knew why, even if medical science didn't), and went on to spread the Word on four continents and maybe 55 countries, including just about every Third World hellhole there was."

Richardson was a past winner of the E.E. Evans Bigheart Award.

He is survived by his sons Don and Darrell, and a granddaughter.

In Passing

FAPA member **Helen Wesson** passed away September 7 from effects of a stroke, and pancreatic cancer.

Lichtman writes: "I know Helen was practically invisible to most of contemporary fandom outside of FAPA, but I considered her a friend and I'll miss her."

"Given her condition as I reported in the August *Fantasy Amateur*, this is surely a blessing. She was never the same after her stroke in June."

To read more about her life, read Robert Lichtman's loc in *Vegas Fandom Weekly* 84. (page 13).

Lichtman adds, "She was working on an issue of *Pendragon* at the time of her stroke, and it's possible I may be able to obtain that for a future mailing."

Dragon's Flower, **Fredda Kullman**, was a fixture in Huckster rooms throughout the Midwest with her table of jewelry and other interesting items. She lost her long battle with breast cancer on May 29. Her sons and her husband were with her. [[Source: *Chronicles of the Dawn Patrol*, June 1, 2006]]

Stephanie Huffman (formerly Stephanie Keith) has died of pancreatitis. She was involved in LASFS in the 1980s.

Kansas City fan **John Vaughan** passed away June 14 after losing his fight against cancer. Vaughan was an active member of the Burroughs Bibliophiles. He was a vet-

eran of the United States Marine Corpse who earned two purple hearts while serving in Vietnam. [[Source: *The Chronicles Of The Dawn Patrol*, 6/20/2006]]

Leslie Bloom, once an active New York fan, died on May 26. She was the victim of a stray bullet in her Washington Heights neighborhood in upper Manhattan. She was 62. Leslie was the sister of LASFS member Mike Bloom, and the one who introduced him to fandom. She also was a passionate bird-watcher. She worked for New York's Administration for Children's Services. Her senseless death became the subject of a column by NY *Times* writer Clyde Haberman. On September 19, police arrested three men who had been engaged in the robbery of an upper Manhattan store when one of them fired the shot that killed Bloom.

Former Glasgow, Scotland, fan artist **Ivor Latto**, who did cover and interior art for Peter Weston's *Speculation*, for *Vector*, and other zines during the 1960s, and published one issue of his own zine, *Fankle*, reportedly died in the spring of 2004. At the time of his death, he was an architect in Glasgow. [[Source: Andrew Porter]]

Jim Overmyer passed away May 22. Tammy Coxen wrote online, "Jim was a wonderful and colorful fixture in Michigan and broader fandom. He was practically a fixture on our "welcome to your first convention" panels, and loved to introduce new people to fandom. He will be greatly missed."

John Hertz's Westercon Notebook

Westercon LIX "Conzilla", July 1-4, 2006

Mission Valley Marriott Hotel, San Diego, California

Author Guest of Honor, Walter Jon Williams; Illustrator, Bob Eggleton; Fan, Bobbi Armbruster. Toastmaster, Kevin J. Anderson. Attendance about 600; in the Art Show \$5,200 sales by 52 artists.

The last time with San Diego, I went to Westercon LI by car-pool. This method seemed very clever until experience showed that driving from Los Angeles on Independence Day weekend wasn't too swift. Now as promised (*File 770 126*) I took a train. On Friday afternoon Martin Jaquish kindly brought me to the hotel. This method seemed very clever until I realized that a color master for Con-Version XXII fliers (Calgary) awaited me at a copy shop even I couldn't walk to. I borrowed a car, thank you Anonymous Benefactor. There at the shop was Jaquish making fliers for the Worldcon Masquerade next month. My father used to say "You were expecting maybe Heinie Manush?" My father never read Avram Davidson, or anyway he never asked "the *spook* box?" Back to the hotel. By the swimming pool was a "dive-in" movie. Where had I seen this done before? A passing fan said "At the Wigwam Westercon." I ought to remember that con, I said. I was Fan GoH (*File 770 144*). At the Las Vegas for '08 Westercon bidding party James Daugherty tried to explain Burning Man to Becky Thomson. In the lobby Ctein tried to explain Charles De Lint's introducing him at Armadillocon XXVII (Austin).

Daylight Saturday. I kept having to get things. As I walked to an office-supplies shop a woman admired my propeller beanie. Her son liked Comic-Con. I gave her a copy of my *Fifteen S-F Books* for the "Basic S-F Library" panel I had next. Back to the hotel. Sheila Finch moderated Spring Schoenhuth, Leigh Strother-Vien, and me. Finch said in teaching s-f at college she began with the

It is not real, but it may be true for all that.

Jókai

questions s-f tries to answer. Schoenhuth said s-f was about the human condition.

Some humans are alien. Strother-Vien



said books should make her want to re-read. Finch said they would if they were thought-provoking. I said this was an ideal of the Romantic age. Finch said they should express heartfelt opinions. At the risk of my life I said this was another one. Japanese monks wrote piercing poetry of emotions they'd never held. Even Beethoven wrote cheerful music in the depths of sorrow. And is the business of fiction expressing opinions? Since I was the only one who had

He liked to see economy of means allied with richness of result.

Sayers

brought a list, we fell to discussing what wasn't on it.

Sue Dawe's docent tour of the Art Show. I try to take other people's tours. Talking about art is itself an art. When people ask what makes a good docent (a word borrowed from the museum world, where it means roughly *tour leader*), I quote Kelly Freas, who got me leading tours, and arranging them at cons, because as he put it *You seem to be able to say what you see*. Dawe pointed out rhythm in Theresa Mather's dragons. She excels, Dawe said, at painting on impossible surfaces. Mather will be Graphic Artist GoH at Westercon LX "Gnomeward Bound" (San Mateo) next

year. We thought Allison Hershey's "Gaia" was facing into the sunset. Patricia McCracken's "Night Orchid" had asymmetric balance; Tamie Inoue, able to read Japanese, said the *haiku* McCracken included was a famous one by Buson. Eggleton brought plenty of Godzilla, whom (whom??) he has probably done more than anyone. Either the con got him as a Guest of Honor, then realized it had to be called Conzilla, or decided to call itself Conzilla and realized that meant he had to be a Guest of Honor. His "One of Our Robots is Missing", also back cover for the Program Book, had not only a robot,

but also a rowboat, labeled C57D for a ship in the film version of *Forbidden Planet*. The robot, its head alone twice as tall as a human being, is awash in the sea, rusting, gulls perching on it, as a looking boy rows by. Its ornamentation – look at the boy's shirt! Dawe said of her own work she drew horses because that brought her closer to them. The most important thing about unicorns was the eyes.

There was a Cabaret. Kevin Roche later explained the head of his Conrad T. Lizard costume was built on a construction-worker hard hat. Among my happy tasks for the weekend was Julia Ree, from the Eaton Collection, University of California at Riverside. She brought her husband Bob along too. Riverside is one of ten U.C. campuses. The Eaton Collection is the largest holding of s-f in the world, pro and fan material both. Bruce Pelz' fanzine collection went there. Those and other fanthings are not so self-explanatory. I've spent some hours lending a hand. The Westercon, I urged the head of Special Collections (which includes Eaton), won't be near you again for years. Neither will the Worldcon. This was heeded, and Ree came to meet, as I said introducing her, the people who wrote the Rosetta Stone. Saturday night at nine we sat behind Karen Anderson to hear filking. She has also helped at Eaton. Barry Gold sang "The Eagle has Landed". His wife Lee explained "Only good songs get rebutted," and Barry



Larry Niven and John DeChancie at Westercon. Photo by Francis Hamit.

sang the *Eagle* parody “Babel is Rising” with identical refrain “Time won’t grind us down to dust again.” Pomegranate wine at the Hollister for ’08 Worldcon bidding party. Casa de Fruta, the bid site, could make any kind but grape, of which ample evidence. Elaborate measures to assure Hollister couldn’t possibly win. To doubters Seth Breidbart proved it from the Constitution.

Sunday after my Art Show docent tour I found Armbruster quietly reading at the Denver for ’08 Worldcon bidding table. This was a good omen. Lee Gold said, by Irish lore if you don’t feed chickens in the morn-

Arouse people to become new.

Announcement of K’ang

ing they go home to Denmark. Danes brought them. Also if you buy a ranch you have to tell them “I’m the new owner” or they go. Geri Sullivan’s docent tour may have been when I promised to contribute something for *Science Fiction Five-Yearly*, due to be published in 2006 with Randy Byers helping Sullivan and both helping Lee Hoffwoman. Nancy Hay exhibited quilts; “Spider Web in the Pumpkin Patch” had three jack o’lanterns, one dismayed. “The Herd”, by Alan Beck of Brooklyn, was spindly quadrupeds with helpless disk faces, each under a floating dark sphere, in the desert sun. Stephen Adams had painted a nude winged woman, tattooed on her left side, in a cage, the bars far apart: why couldn’t she get out? She perched, looking up, on three platforms of junk, metal scraps, a corroded radiation-danger placard, four Compact Discs carefully strung; behind her, an orange planet with odd continents, a background of dark mottling – a force field? Why had she polished her fingernails and toenails? Joni Dashoff who would be Art

Show Director at the Worldcon, and Sullivan, and I, judged the Art Show; we gave this “Best Science Fantasy”, the Beck “Most Alien”. Jonathan Gage brought several spectacular pieces from his Dragon Renaissance, each carved from a single block of wood as a Balinese had taught him, to which we gave an award for Body of Work.

The San Diego Mars Society held a movie marathon, with *Rocketship X-M*, the 1953 *War of the Worlds* and, it is only fair to say, *The Three Stooges in Orbit*. However, someone had to teach Regency Dancing. I was also host of the Fanzine Lounge, and rejoiced to see a kind write-up by John DeChancie in the daily newszine. We were given a hotel room across from the Hospital-

Yet with my noble reason ‘gainst
my fury
Do I take part

Shakespeare

ity Suite. With help from Karen Anderson, Judy Bemis, Chaz Boston-Baden, Ctein, DeChancie, Lin & Rich McAllister, Milt Stevens, and Lauraine Tutihasi, we were able to stay open most of the daylight hours. I brought three or four dozen current fanzines to look at, Stevens some historic ones, Tutihasi a CD with electronic ones, and following the Sullivan rule *Bring toys* we had some of those too. We used the television set on Tuesday to watch the *Discovery* launch (carrying Mission Specialist Stephanie Wilson, second black woman into Space, yay). I am for the Don Fitch theory that fanziners should host a space clearly identified – I like “Fanzine Lounge”, which strikes the right note, and says *fanzine* – easy to find and hospitable for people who don’t already know all about it. If you were there, you did notice the poster on the ceil-

ing, didn’t you? After dancing, Margaritaville with Williams mixing, Sandra Childress pouring. Pimm’s Cup at the Jim Baen memorial. Hot dogs at the Chicago for ’08 Worldcon bidding party; Sharon Sbarsky and Dashoff traded ’98 stories, when Boston bid for Orlando, and Philadelphia won. Mukune “Root of Innocence” *junmai-ginjo saké* at the League of Evil Geniuses party. I kid you not.

Monday, Earth at aphelion, farthest from the Sun. For me, “Non-Genre Classics as Sources” 10 a.m., moderating Amy Sterling Casil, Jean Lorrach, Joy Oestreicher. Lorrach said, steal from the best. I said, they can be nourishing. Lorrach said s-f itself came from the Romantic age. From the audience, what about *The Odyssey*? If told today it would be fantasy; the panel almost slid into pondering what it was at the time of writing. Casil said s-f has intellect. I remarked we do little tragedy (from the audience: *Frankenstein* is two tragedies). Lorrach said tragedy requires the protagonist be important enough that his tragedy is the tragedy of his society. This was a trenchant answer. We do not like to hear about important people, and we do not like to hear about people who can stand for a world. No bishops, no kings. “S-F and Spirituality”, moderating Sheila Finch, Lorna Freeman, Jeannie Graham. Graham said “I

Don’t worry, I played it like that
for twenty years myself.

Artur Schnabel

write very Christian fantasy: vampire fiction.” We talked of *A Canticle for Leibowitz* and Katherine Kurtz’ *Camber* books. I thought there was a lot of anti-religious s-f. Freeman said religion could have a place in any fiction, it was part of human life. Finch said the more she wrote, the more she found the characters were in search of God, sometimes astonishing the author.

Las Vegas beat Phoenix for the ’08 Westercon 113-90. While Armbruster and Williams presided over “Iron Chef Conzilla” outdoors, where the equipment could be set up, I moderated Marty Massoglia, Jonathan Post, and Jim Young on “S-F 1940-1960”. Massoglia brought three dozen books as a visual aid. Here came Isaac Asimov, Arthur Clarke, Robert Heinlein; in graphics, Edd Cartier, Virgil Finlay, Frank Kelly Freas. By 1951 three-fourths of U.S. houses had television. In 1952 Ballantine Books started, in 1953, Ace (but see the acrostic in David McDaniel’s *Monster Wheel Affair*). Post said, paperback s-f was sent to soldiers. I said, pocket books fit in pockets. What made this age great? It ran from *The Incomplete Enchanter* and *Slan* to *Leibowitz* and *Rogue*

Moon. Young said, the creation of a literature that helped us deal with change. Massoglia said, a sense of wonder. It was the reign of John Campbell. How about good craftsmanship? Outside, in the blazing sun, the secret Iron Chef ingredient was fire. All had been consumed but a taste of defending undefeated champion Melissa Campbell's made-on-the-spot ice cream, cinnamon with Red Hots. When I recovered I was so struck by the memory of Tim Powers' *Expiration Date* that I went looking for him.

Masquerade Director was Sandy Manning – from Alaska! Janet Anderson, Williams, and I judged. Rachael and Shannah Linker as “Temporal Pirates” won Best Novice (and Workmanship Honorable Men-

View of the celestial regions where great songs are sung.

Harlan Ellison

tion for Prop Building); a blue police box led to Grand Theft, Tardis. Cat and Robin Hunt and Adam Martin won Best Journeyman (and Judges' Choice, Workmanship) for “LEPrecon”, Lower Elements Police Reconnaissance from Eoin Colfer's *Artemis Fowl*, Cat portraying the elven Captain Holly Short. Judges' Choice, Master (and Best Workmanship in Show), was Anastasia Hunter as “Handmaiden of Barad-dur”, helmed with a tower, gowned in glittering red Elizabethan appliqué, raising a spiderweb staff that shone as the stage went black. Best in Show was Kate Morgenstern and Thomas Benson, “The New Oz” (Master) – yes, the con treasurer – no, not “The New 03” as the newsletter printed, aiee – Wicked Witch Morgenstern griping to Glinda by cell-phone, Benson with wings, a fez, a monkey face, and a Halliburton case of bananas (which he made that day from foam-core and yellow duct-tape, Workmanship Honorable Mention) strewn everywhere as he flew off.

The fliers for Con-Version XXII were a success. In color, with a strange creature by Illustrator GoH Adrian Kleinbergen, they looked swell, and since I was to be Fan GoH it seemed only fair I should arrange to get them printed and posted, all a by-product of Due North, last year's Westercon (*File 770* 146). The dodo did not fare as well. Students of advertising speak of campaigns so memorable no one can remember what they were for. This year almost as soon as I arrived people asked me where he was. I had not been asked to introduce him again. He was a wonderful Folkmanis hand-and-arm puppet I'd had at Due North to help me hand out Capclave V fliers (Washington, DC), the Author GoH being Howard Waldrop and the

Other GoHs being Teresa & Patrick Nielsen Hayden, for whose fanzine he was named Izzard. When he indeed was presented to me once more, I asked, reasonably enough, “Where are the Capclave VI fliers?” Even

Tried to unite civility and truth.

Jane Austen

by Ben Yalow they could not be found. Long after Closing Ceremonies it appeared they had in fact reached the con, but not Ben and me.

Ten a.m. Tuesday, “Why Do We Need Conventions?”, moderating Armbruster, Arizona Gleason, Bridget Landry, Janet Tait. Gleason said, interaction. Landry said, the discovery “Wow! There are other people!” Tait said, a general-interest con is a big tent. Armbruster said, in the mundane world people have long been saying “Meetings will die”, but we need to connect in person. I said, maybe some things are best done in writing, some by phone, some in person. Landry said, in person you can settle your next Masquerade entry. Armbruster said, you see what you have in common. Landry said, you find things you didn't know you were interested in. I said, we should invite people we don't already know. Tait said Comic-Con has a mission of educating people in the popular arts. By this time Bandit's boat race was ready. For days he had been roiling rambunctious roboteers, recruiting remote-controllers and bolstering builders. Now in the cacophonous climax we cascaded out – outdoors again – where in a temperature fondly Fahrenheit he had put up a pool. Three teams had made electric boats, each to its team's own design. Bandit had built another as a demonstrator. All used parts from a supply dump. They had to steer round a course, with rounding pylons, and reversing. There were propellers in the water and in the air – I mean, on purpose – and a paddle wheel. Manning, Williams, and I judged. Dozens watched and cheered. Team Ariel won by ten seconds with 2:20. The spirit of Hugo Gernsback, who loved science fiction because it would make us better engineers, surely beamed.

There was Eggleton at the Massoglias'

Need alone is negative. The greatest productions spring from an affirmation.

Chaim Weizmann

bookstall in the Dealers' Room. He picked out books, studied them, smiled. Improving his library?

In fact he was playing “Guess the Artist”, trying whether he could identify the cover pictures. Illustrators do this. When I came within hearing and greeted him he did a few aloud. He was right a lot. I was fascinated. Might this go into the Worldcon program? The thought seized both of us, and indeed it came to pass. With the help of Mark Olson, Joe Siclari, the extensive LASFS clubhouse library, Mike Donahue on tech, and panelists Greg Bear, Eggleton, Alex Eisenstein, Jane Frank, and Tom Kidd, me hosting, we spent a happy hour at L.A.con IV, recognizing an Emshwiller interior from *Again, Dangerous Visions*, and explaining to each other why a very characteristic (I thought) Alan Gutierrez, “Lagrange Point”, had to be by someone else. But that is really another story.

++ John Hertz

Clipping Service

Mark R. Leeper: Evelyn has been worried as to the post-Katrina state of the Jefferson Davis House in near Biloxi, Mississippi. I could assure her that there were people trying to return things to exactly the way they were when Davis lived there. Fortunately, the United States Constitution seems to keep getting in the way.

Mark Leeper [MT Void, 6/2/2006]: We watched as we passed the milestones of the telecommuting capability. First there were connections to home PCs. You could be twenty miles from the company and still doing your work. You did not have to come to the building to get work done on the weekends. It sounded good, but at the same time we knew that if it came about we would probably be expected to work on weekends. Well, it was worth the price. Then a few technical visionaries tried to prove you actually could live in another state and do the same work. And, yes, they proved their point. The technology really was good enough that the people doing the work could live places like Florida and Arizona. Wow! Things were REALLY getting better. And now the dream has actually become a reality. People are working for technology companies in New Jersey while they really are living in exotic places like Bangalore, Hyderabad, Bombay, and New Delhi. And a lot of the people I knew don't have to come in to work at all. Sadly most of the people who looked forward to what telecommuting would do no longer work for Bell Laboratories. But that also is the power of this technology.

CHRISTMAS 2006: TWO STORIES



SNOWBOUND IN MOROCCO BY DIANA GLYER

In my family, nothing stays nailed down for long. It's not just the crooked curtain rod in the living room or the patch sewn onto the seat of my favorite jeans. It's the family itself that keeps sliding apart, falling loose, splitting along the seams. We tend to cope by trying extra hard to make some things certain. Holiday traditions, for one. We make it a priority to get together on Christmas Eve, no matter how far-flung we are, how tough the finances, how hard to schedule. For as long as I can remember, celebrating Christmas Eve has been the one thing all year long that helps us know who we are.

That is how I happened to be on a Greyhound bus on the morning of December 24. I had just started my first job, teaching high school in Chicago. The only way for me to get home was a late ticket on a cheap bus. Home was Cincinnati, Ohio, a simple diagonal across Midwestern farmland. Easy.

There were snow warnings, but from what I could tell, that was part of the fun. White Christmas and all that. But we weren't on the road an hour before the snow flakes turned to snow fall, and then it just got harder and harder. This is a very big bus, I thought. This is a very short trip. I wasn't really worried about it. I zoned out, napped a little, woke to worried voices. The snow plows were having trouble keeping up, and the snow just kept coming. Now it was piling up in earnest.

We heard that they were closing sections of the interstate. Then sections of *our* interstate. Then the flashing lights and sirens

came alongside and directed us to the next off-ramp. We went a couple miles down some little country roads, and pulled up in front of a church. "Go on inside, get warm. Things should open up in a couple hours." A couple hours? I was getting nervous. What if I was late for Christmas Eve?

We went inside, all blinking, uncertain. People went in to the fellowship hall, and at down in little clusters, introducing themselves, talking in quiet, timid voices. Little comforts were drawn out of backpacks and carry-ons: a deck of cards, a tin of cookies, a bag of Fritos. People didn't have much, but they shared what they had. And it was enough. Someone very official told us we were in Morocco, Indiana; the pastor of the church came in a short while later to say hi.

Hours passed. And more snow fell. The storm was so bad that cars couldn't get through. Even if they could, grocery stores were long since closed for the holiday. There was a little food in the church kitchen; we put things together the best we could. I turned to the person sitting next to me on the floor. "We have to leave soon," I said. "I have to be home for Christmas Eve." She blinked and said slowly, "You aren't going to be anywhere tonight." I tried as hard as I could to make sense of those words.

I went into the sanctuary, knelt at the altar to say my prayers, then curled up and fell asleep in a pew. When I woke, it was Christmas morning, and there was a line for the bathroom, a line for the phone, a line for a cup of water. The pastor had come back, and he gently ushered us into the sanctuary for a short service of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving? He was right. There was a lot to be thankful for. On Christmas Eve we had found shelter. We had made a small community. We had received a warm and honest welcome. As we sang Christmas carols that day, they seemed very real to me. My manager in Morocco.

As we came out of the sanctuary, mem-

bers of the church started to pour in the front door. They had ridden snowmobiles and tractors and old farm horses to get there. They brought boxes of food: families had gathered up all of the supplies for their own Christmas dinners, and then they fought through snow drifts eight feet high to bring Christmas dinner to a busload of strangers. We sang, we ate, we laughed, we celebrated with a spirit of joy I can still remember. By noon the interstate had been cleared and salted, and our bus inched its way back to Chicago. My first Christmas Eve away from my family. It had been family indeed.

THE TREE OF LIGHT BY TIM DAVIS

Christmas evokes different memories for almost every person. The truth is that every family has some unique way of celebrating the Christmas holidays. There are specific traditions, some obvious and some not, which most people will describe as being the key elements that have to be present to constitute a good Christmas. In my family that key element is risk of life and/or limb.

It all started the day my dad decided to string lights from our fifteen-foot tall TV antenna in order to make a tree of Christmas lights (living in the middle of the desert, we relied on UHF antenna as our only link to the outside world). My father dragged both my brother and I out in the freezing cold of a winter's night, and started to string lights from the pole that was attached to the side of our mobile home and held our TV antenna aloft. He then let down the strands of lights to us so we could tether them to the ground. The first year we embarked on this adventure my father was bragging about how the tree would be the talk of the town.

"Just wait," he said as he secured another string of lights. "You will be able to see this tree all the way to the grocery store." This particular business was two miles away and up the sloping foot of the mountain, so naturally it should be easy to see our house from that location (if we had a searchlight).

When dad tried to climb down the ladder, he must have slipped on one of the rungs of the ladder. The next thing we boys knew was that dad was on his butt, in the dirt, looking up at the lights we had strung, and laughing very hard. Of course, he only fell from halfway up the sixteen-foot ladder, so he got up and walked it off like the man he was. It took him a day or two to stop wincing when he sat, but we had had worse hap-

pen at our house before and paid it no mind. Dad was satisfied with the accomplishment he had made, and proud of the face he had not needed to go to the hospital.

A few days latter my family was driving home from bible study and my brother says, "Dad, I can't see the tree from here." We were, of course, only at the end of our block and driving towards the house.

"Don't worry about it," my Dad's pride seemed to be wounded. "We'll make it taller next year."

As soon as I heard those words leave my father's lips, I knew that this was going to be a quest for him. You know, the *National Lampoon's* Clark Griswold kind of quest that can only get worse with the passage of time. He was going to get that tree so high up, and so tall that anyone would be able to see it from across the whole High Desert if they happened to glance in the direction of our house. Failure was not an option.

The next year, the tree was erected and elevated up an additional eight feet. Dad also bought more lights so that the tree would be brighter and easier to see. Sure enough, a strong wind started to blow while setting it up, and things went horribly bad. Desert winds can blow very strong, and turn the strongest structure into play toy if it is not properly secured to the ground. But my dad was determined to get that tree up. And by the end of the night he, and my brother, and I, all had cuts and rope burns from the effort of getting the tree up and secure. Sure enough, when we woke the next morning, we found the lights had been shattered and smashed when the wind tore the newly extended antenna pole off the house and into a nearby Joshua tree.

"Next year," my Dad said. "Next year we will do it right, and make it stronger."

In fact, the next year he did make it better and stronger, but it could still not be seen from the highway. That was the year my brother fell off the top of the roof. If anything the fall only made both my brother and my Dad more determined to get that tree up and make it even bigger. They were men on a mission and would not be detoured.

Eventually I had to leave for college, and this excluded me from a majority of the Christmas decorating chores that started the day after Thanksgiving, as was the tradition at my house. This included the dreaded "Christmas Tree of Light Project," as my brother had dubbed it. Earlier that year my father and my brother had erected a flagpole. The flagpole had withstood a number of



windstorms that summer, and was indeed visible from a good distance away. When the Christmas season came around, my brother took down the Stars and Bars that he flew with pride, and constructed a rig to hoist the Christmas lights up on. This year was going to be different. They had a plan. They had a tested and proven structure, and years of failure had shown them what not to do.

The blessed day finally arrived when it was time to hoist up the lights and plug them in. This was a process that could only be done at night. The logic behind this is that only at nighttime can you see if all of the lights are working. It would be a nightmare to get the lights all the way up the flagpole, only to have to take them down again because a single light was out! So they plugged the lights in and hoisted the rig into the night sky. When the rig reached the top my dad told Stephen to tie off the rope and come see how awesome it looked. Stephen, being only a freshman in high school, and being so excited, must not have tied off the rope very well. As he made his way from underneath the strings of light, the rig fell from the top of the pole, and lights started to *pop* as they smashed into the ground. My brother soon found himself in a shower of sparks and light, and pulled to the ground by descending strands of Christmas lights.

When my brother recounted this story to me, I laughed. I also noticed that the lights were erected on the same flagpole. He and my Dad had waited a few days to get over the shock, replaced the broken lights, and put the tree back up. "It's Christmas," my brother said. "We have to have 'The Tree of Light.' It's not Christmas without that tree."

Every year my family goes through the next installment of "The Saga of the Tree of Light." This year my wife and I tactfully left Thanksgiving before my brother could rope me into putting up that tree again. But, I know that there will be a tree of light, standing approximately fifty feet high by now, pointing out my parent's home to the whole

town.

To some people there has to be the right kind of tree for Christmas to feel right. For some people it's the presence of particular family members, or a movie they all watch during the Christmas season. I personally wish that my family has some sort of Christmas moose or fudge that we looked forward to every year, or even a song. However, and this is the part that really is kind of weird, I look forward to this year's story of what went wrong with "The Tree of Light." Somehow, in a sick and twisted way, it wouldn't be Christmas at the Gauldin house without recounting how Dad and Stephen almost killed themselves this year while decorating for Christmas.

L.A.con IV Literacy Donations Yield Nearly \$8,500

[[From the committee's press release]]

L.A.con IV, the 64th World Science Fiction Convention, continued a tradition from L.A.con II in 1984 and L.A.con III in 1996 by holding a special Book Exhibit of new and recent publications.

There was only one way to acquire the works actually on display in the Book Exhibit. During the course of the convention, raffle tickets were available for a small donation. And on the final day of the convention, the items were divided into several dozen lots worth approximately \$100 each and raffled off to lucky winners.

In total, \$8,463.75 has been divided between two charities. RIF (or Reading Is Fundamental) is a national charity in the US now in its 40th year. In that time, it has given over 300 million new books to children, in support of its goal of a literate nation. One in which all children have access to books and are given to opportunity to discover the joys and value of reading. The other charity is the Library Foundation of Los Angeles which provides support for the Los Angeles Public Library. Money from the L.A.con IV donation is being used for their Fund for New Information Technologies.

The Book Exhibit was overseen by Ron and Val Ontell and their staff and the concept was borrowed initially from the New York area regional Lunacon, which had been hosting similar events in the late 1970s and 1980s.

This was the third time I've visited Midwestcon. For many years, the longest running relaxacon has been held in or near Cincinnati on the last weekend of June. The last few years it has been at the Doubletree Guest Suites in Sharonville, Ohio.

Midwestcon has what may be the largest group of long time fans (as in 50 years plus). For a change, it's fun being one of the young ones. The members of the CFG (Cincinnati Fan Group) notice newcomers to the convention and make sure they are not ignored.

Midwestcon is also a popular low key gathering place for big name fans from the

Midwestcon 57 by Keith Stokes

northeast. The small convention had parties from four WorldCon bids.

There is little or no programming, and after talking, eating and drinking, the most common activity is cards - small stakes poker in a private room, or Wizard in the hospitality room. This is the only place I have ever seen Wizard played and it was

easy to pickup again.

This year's most notable activity was a memorial/wake for Howard DeVore who passed away 6 months ago. Howard had attended every previous Midwestcon and he requested that the family not have a funeral, but do this instead. His daughters and their children were present, as well as other friends, many of whom had not visited Midwestcon in many years, if ever. There was a reception with appetizers and wonderful deserts, followed by 90-minute gathering that was nearly a roast. Just what Howard wanted.



Howard DeVore Memorial at Midwestcon: (Left) Kathy Rodegler, Julieanne Fish, Sheryl DeVore Davidge, Suzanne DeVore Reynolds, Karol DeVore Sissom. (Right) Ray Beam. Photos by Keith Stokes.

Thirty Years and a Day; It's A Wonderful Life After All... 30 Years In Fandom by Chris M. Barkley

"What? Are YOU crazy? They'll never let US in there!"

It was sometime in the afternoon in mid-June 1976. A sultry Wednesday or Thursday I think. Not too humid a day, just right. The windows were open and a nice breeze came through. I was sitting in the apartment of my best friend of several years, Michael Hahn, reading her June 1976 copy of *Analog Science Fact/Fiction*. Her dear mother, Mary, was snoozing in the other room, oblivious to her daughter's outburst. The last page was open and I had just informed her that there was a notice of a science fiction convention starting on June 25 at the Quality Inn in Norwood, small city enclosed within Cincinnati's city limits, just miles away and had casually asked her if she wanted to go.

Not that this was a date or anything of the sort; we had met years earlier when I had helped Mary with her trash during a sanitary

workers strike. So Micheale came home and found me on her couch, eating chocolate and watching *Columbo* with her mother. She proceeded to treat me like the little brother she never had and I treated her like a smarter, older sister. I introduced her to relevant comics such as the groundbreaking collaboration of Denny O'Neil/Neal Adams on *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* (Speedy being hooked on smack *really* freaked her out!). She, in turn gave me a little story called "A Boy and His Dog" to read (the sex and violence therein *really* freaked me out at age 15, so we were even).

Consider the times; Richard Nixon had resigned from office nearly two years ago. The Bicentennial of the United States was weeks away. Disco music and punk rock were on the cultural horizon. The Cincinnati Reds were destroying the National League, rambling towards an inevitable showdown

with the hated New York Yankees.

In Tunisia and London, filmmaker George Lucas is working on something called "The Star Wars." His friend and rival Stephen Spielberg was following up his last blockbuster, *Jaws*, working on a movie about UFOs. Stage actor Christopher Reeve is busy pretending to drown in his first movie debut, a Charlton Heston potboiler called *Gray Lady Down*.

Unelected President Gerald Ford and a former submarine commander/Georgia governor/part-time peanut farmer Jimmy Carter get ready to slug it out in the fall elections. Jimmy Hoffa was still missing. Patricia Hearst had been found.

Looking back over thirty years, I am overwhelmed by the passage of history. It has certainly been an exciting, if not to mention troubling, time to be alive. I don't consider the old Chinese proverb "May you live

in interesting times” much of a curse at all when you’re a science fiction fan. Wondrous or terrifying, it’s just great to be alive and among good friends.

When I went to my first Midwestcon, I had no idea what profound changes it would have on my life. I immediately drank in the egalitarian atmosphere everyone reveled in, something I had never experienced and rare have ever since. In fandom, I found that I was liked or disliked, loved or hated, cheered or booed because of who I was, not because I was black.

I also had a massive self esteem problem that has gradually melted away over the years; this was due to my intellect (which was rather healthy in those days) and my “one size fits all” assumptions about human behavior and conduct were constantly being challenged by the people I met in fandom.

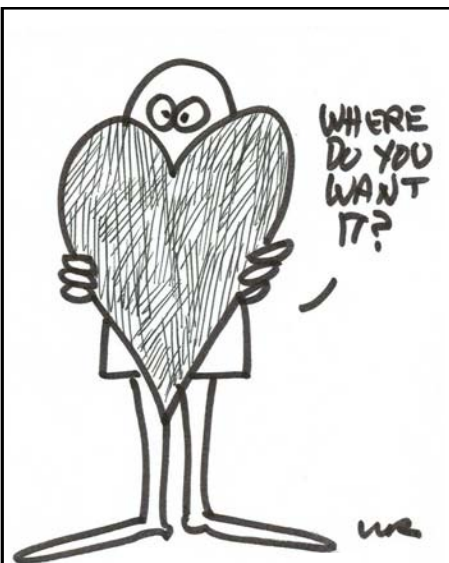
I also learned first hand the art of tact with the opposite sex (which I still working on, it’s a lifelong project), how to argue, when to be diplomatic, when to not use sarcasm on the weak and helpless, when to fight for a cause and when to abandon one and most importantly, how to french kiss (with much thanks to Katy, Sandy, Anne and Nancy)

In the course of my travels I have made a great many friends; fans, writers, artists, editors and others of the acceptably odd variety, all of whom I love and cherish dearly. I especially remember those who have departed; the irascible and loveable Howard DeVore, Bea Mahaffey and the late Bill Bowers...who strangely enough, was a friend to my wife, Naomi Cowan-Barkley, when they worked together at Kenner Toys before I met her in the early 1980’s.

One of my most memorable moments came at this first Midwestcon even though I didn’t know it at the time...it was the sight of two living legends, Edmund Hamilton and Leigh Brackett, sitting on the patio overlooking the pool, enjoying themselves.

Another was at my first Worldcon a year later in Miami Beach; Robert and Virginia Heinlein hurrying though an exhibit hall at top stride (it seemed) spared a few precious moments at Suncon to accept a greeting from me since I knew a good acquaintance of theirs, a Pennsylvania sf writer named Betty Curtis. It was only 30 seconds but I could have done handstands for days afterwards. Wow.

I’ve had dinner with Harlan Ellison, writing tips from Frederick Pohl, hosted SF Jeopardy at Millennicons, scored some pot for Spider and Jeanne Robinson (but say, who hasn’t done that at one point or another), held Charles Addams posthumously won Hugo Award in my hands and won money off of Joe Haldeman at poker. Who sez it’s



**Cheerfully dedicated
to the stalwart
members of the
Cincinnati Fantasy
Group and all the
Midwestcon
Regulars (and
Irregulars). And in
particular to Guy
Allen and Becca
Levin for their
patience and trust
through a very
trying year and to
the late Jim Baen.**

not a wonderful life? Not I.

In the end, it might never have happened.

Back in 1976, I wasn’t very astute or focused. After two years of college, I had no idea what to do with my life. I was probably dumber and more callow than Luke Skywalker (in Episode III, of course). And yet...

I instinctively knew that going down to the Quality Inn thirty years ago was a pretty good idea. Probably one of the few I’ve ever had.

So I fixed a determined and steely gaze at my best friend in the world Michael and told her, “Oh yeah, well the least they can do is throw us out.” And what the hell, she came along with me and changed her life as well.

And may our journeys, here and elsewhere, continue to be wondrous and full.

Happy Anniversary, kiddo!

Midwestcon 57 June 22-25, 2006 A Brief Report

Midwestcon 57 was held from June 23-25, 2006 at the Doubletree Inn in suburban city of Blue Ash, just north of Cincinnati, Ohio. The attendance was approximately 150 people onsite according to the self described “Scribe” of the Cincinnati Fantasy Group, Deborah Oaks.

The highlights of the convention included a dinner and memorial wake for the late Howard Devore of Detroit, Michigan, who was (and still is) the Fan Guest of Honor of this year’s World Science Fiction Convention, L.A.Con IV, which will be held in Anaheim, California on August 23-27, 2006

An exhibit of Mr. Devore’s artifacts was erected in the huckster’s room/art show by his immediate family, who also attended, hosted the memorial dinner Saturday evening and the tribute ceremony afterwards.

Among the items displayed were:

- Several large albums of photographs and copies of correspondence between Mr. Devore and other luminaries in comics, sf fandom, sf writers, editors and artists.
 - A standing display case featuring two First Fandom patches and a variety badges from various conventions he attended.
 - Several dishes multi colored, heart shaped Sweet Tarts for visitors.
- The MOST startling and spectacular artifacts on display were:
- A golden Hugo rocket prototype with the original box it was mailed in (dated and postmarked 1954!).
 - A freestanding, unfinished Hugo award rocket, which was also a gift from the original designer.
 - An original 1965 Nebula award originally owned by Roger Zelazny.

If you own a hardcover copy of the very first volume of the Nebula Award Stories, you’ll see a photograph of Zelazny proudly posing in front of the two awards he won that evening; for the Novella “He Who Shapes” and for the novelette, “The Doors of His Face, The Lamps of His Mouth.” Shortly thereafter, Zelazny dropped and broke the “Faces” Nebula. Upon learning this, SFWA



(L) Micheale Jordan and Chris Barkley at 2005 Midwestcon. **(M) Roger Zelazny's Nebula** displayed at the 2006 Midwestcon. **(R) Rusty Hevelin and Margaret Kiefer** at 2006 Midwestcon. Photos by Keith Stokes.

promptly provided him a replacement. And as for the original? Did Zelazny give it to Howard or did Howard offer to fix it for him (it's epoxy-ed as far as I could tell). None of the several family members I talked to seemed to know but if I had to guess, knowing Howard, it would be the latter story.

I have held more than a dozen Hugo Awards in my eager and trembling hand but nothing compares to the weight and heft of this solid piece of Lucite.

Several well meaning people (including your trustworthy reporter and another prominent fan, Rusty Hevelin, among them) have advised the Devore family to contact Joe Siclari of Fanac.org to preserve all the photos and letters, and to contact the Science Fiction Museum in Seattle and the SF Hall of Fame in Kansas City to assess their value.

Midwestcon is one of the oldest, continuously running conventions in America. Since its beginning and to this day it has been well known fact that the Cincinnati Fantasy Group, by more or less consensus, has shunned programming of any sort. That is

until recently.

To the best of my knowledge, there has always been a huckster's room. At one point there was an art show which was discontinued sometimes in the 1980's. So there was a bit a stir among the CFG members when someone, on their own mind you, decided to revive the art show four years ago.

Micheale Jordan presided over the Midwestcon 57 Art Show and Auction, which was held poolside during the beginning of the Devore memorial dinner. Of particular note was the ceramic art of Peri Charilifu of Denver, Colorado. His works consisted of a dozen or so pieces of functioning kitchenware; bowls, cups, a crucible and a teapot, all inscribed with Elven language of J.R.R Tolkien's epic fantasy *The Lord of the Rings*. All of the items were sold, with the prices ranging from \$15-45. Ironically, Mr. Charlifu might have sold even more had several other pieces not broken in transit to the convention. Ms. Jordan reported that the artist was rather nonplussed about the breakage and was very happy with the results of

the auction.

Another rather new innovation was Deborah Oakes second annual Dessert Contest (which no one particularly objected to) which was held Friday evening in the consuite. The winner was...Ms. Micheale Jordan with her Greek Orange Walnut Cake.

Bid parties were held by Columbus, Chicago and Denver for the 2008 Worldcon bid and Montreal and Kansas City for the 2009 bid. Of particular interest was the Columbus party, whose bid party was well organized and attended, belied rumors that the bid itself was either moribund or dead in the water. The Chair, Kim Williams, expressed some hope that the Columbus bid could prevail in the three-way race. Voting for the 2008 World SF Convention will conclude at this year's Worldcon in Anaheim.



(L) Dave McCarty of the Chicago in 2008 bid. **(M) Ken Moore** at the Howard DeVore reception; and **(R) Kent Bloom** of the Denver in 2008 bid. Photographs by Keith Stokes, used by permission.



The Fanivore

Chris Garcia

I've had a rough couple of weeks and coming back to work and being handed *File 770's* envelope and I haven't stopped reading it in the six hours since I got it!

First off, I must point out that you've blown our cover. For the last few months, people have been accusing me of being a pseudonym of everyone from Arnie Katz to rich brown, but no one ever thought the truth, that I was in fact Mr. Mike Glycer...that is until you noted that my edress was mikeglyer@cs.com! Now, the cover is blown and no one will ever send a message to garcia@computerhistory.org like we had planned!

To me, other than the sad passings of the last year, nothing has been a bigger story to me than the downing of server Boston-Baden. I used the gallery all the time for info and for images. I was even featured a couple of times in photos that I actually admitted were out there. The loss of the Freas and Aragones art was nearly as bad to me. Things like that suck, but at least we're slowing getting some of Chaz's images back.

Amazon is doing a lot of stuff that I appreciate, especially with their attention to the shorts (both stories and films). I almost took a job with Amazon in the early part of this decade, but passed it up because I wouldn't be able to say that I had the mother of all Geek jobs.

Congrats on yet another nom for Best Fanzine. It must be getting dull to constantly have to deal with being nominated and occasionally winning. I am miffed that *The Old Negro Space Programme* short that I thought was the funniest thing I'd ever seen when I first had it thrust upon me a year or so ago can't be nominated. True, there are specific requirements, and I understand them, but it still sucks.

I'm saddened to hear that Frankie Thomas passed away (the day before my Pops passed away, and he was a big fan of Frankie's) and it may be another part of the curse of the big con that's been true for the last couple of years. It rather bums me out. I'll be drinking to Howard and Frankie in LA this year, though, just as planned.

Love Schirmeister's work. I really wish I could get him to do some art for *The Drink Tank*. The Rotsler is one award that I am so glad exists. I hope someone will write a long book on Bill's life because I've heard so many amazing stories about him.



must buy my ex-girlfriend's daughter the Complete Idiot's Guide to Pirates. She loves pirates so much that she watched all of Pirates of the Caribbean even though it was terrifying her at times. I tried to stop her, but that girl can give a wicked good Indian burn.

Can't wait for *The Bastards of Kirk*. Lloyd's a good guy and I'll finally get to meet him at LACon and then we'll have to talk voice acting as I'm the voice of Frank Wu's Guidolon. Yet another thing I've got in common with Lloyd.

Sadly, I don't think I got to meet John Hertz at CascadiaCon. I was in the Fan Lounge a lot, and spent most of that time in the Mimeo section (which was fascinating to guy who never had to do the Mimeo thing) and yet I don't remember seeing him. I was at the trial of my good pal Kevin Standlee and it was a hoot and a half. I'm glad I got to see such a fine miscarriage of justice in person...without having to watch CSPAN!

I wish, wish, wish I could make it to an EasterCon, but alas, timing and money will make that impossible through at least the middle-term. Great report from James, and I'm now so interested in the concept of the Cyberdrome. British fandom is in many ways a mystery to me, as I've often said many places, but I think I'll get a better handle on them if I just manage to get a copy of *Plokta* in my sweaty little hands!

I'm all about the Las Vegas Westercon

bid. I can't say how much I'm all for a con that takes place in my favourite non-California fannish city. I saw the JW Marriott and it's a lovely place. True, the heat can be awful, but there's so much air-conditioning in LA that I've often used a blanket in the various places I've stayed!

Joseph Nicholas

Thanks for the latest issue of *File 770*, and for printing so much of my previous letter therein.

I've one comment to make so far, offering a correction to your note on page 3 of Roy Kettle's OBE. Firstly, the title of the honour: it's not Officer of the British Empire, but Order of the British Empire. Secondly, getting an OBE doesn't make you a knight; for that, you have to actually be knighted, in the traditional way with a sword tap on each shoulder, after which you are entitled to put "Sir" before your name -- as in Sir Arthur C Clarke, or Sir Cliff Richard (although in fact the convention is that the surname is abandoned in formal address, because a Sir is deemed to be so thunderingly important that absolutely *everyone* should know who they are just from the mention of their first name alone).

Another point to make is that getting an OBE isn't that unusual -- all career civil servants receive an honour at some point towards the end of their working lives, the nature of the honour depending on factors such as length of service, what they actually did, what position in the hierarchy they reached...my father received a CMG* towards the end of his career, and I expect I shall be offered an honour towards the end of mine. Which perhaps suggests why Kettle has received this gong at this time; he can be only a few years older than I, and has been awarded it now because he is contemplating early retirement. And why not? If I thought we could afford it, I'd take early retirement too.

(*CMG: the Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George, aka Call Me God. The next level up in this Order is the Grand Cross, the GCMG aka God Calls Me God.)

[[For what it's worth, I consulted the Wikipedia before writing this item, though evidently I still didn't get it right way. I do know it's the Order of the British Empire, and within that Order Kettle was made an Officer. So it was, of course, an exaggeration.

tion (= outright error) to call him a knight. But is it really wrong to assume he would be called Sir? I didn't realize Sir Arthur Clarke had received a different rank within the order, I guess that may be where I went wrong.]]

Roy would only be called "sir" (and with a lower case S) by his subordinates -- and then only by very junior subordinates: in the modern civil service, we're all on first-name terms with everyone, including those several grades above us. (Government ministers, by contrast, would be addressed as "sir", or -- more commonly these days -- "minister".) Certainly, the only person I've ever addressed as "Sir" (with a capital S) was Sir John Krebs, first Chairman of the Food Standards Agency (the government department where I've been working since 1998, when it was formed.)

Is Arthur C. Clarke an OBE as well as a knight? Dunno, really -- for someone who's now written you two e-mails on the subject of honours (this being the second), I'm amazingly indifferent towards the whole business. When they offer me my gong on retirement, I plan to refuse -- as you might appreciate, a long-standing leftie such as myself cannot possibly countenance the idea that one grade of honour makes one better than another!

Joseph T. Major

Editorial Notes: There used to be a big gray and white cat that hung around our house. Others fed him -- he was rather plump -- but he yowled at our cats and they hissed back. One night he was hit by a car. Guess who had to bury him.

Knights of the Paper Spaceship: Leroy isn't a knight. An Officer of the Order of the British Empire is still only a "Mr." except when she's a "Mrs.", "Ms." or "Miss". A. A. Milne write a poem about that:

O.B.E.

By A. A. Milne

I know a Captain of Industry,
Who made big bombs for the R.F.C.,
And collared a lot of £ s. d. —
And he — thank God! — has the O.B.E.

I know a Lady of Pedigree,
Who asked some soldiers out to tea,
And said "Dear me!" and "Yes, I see" —
And she — thank God! — has the O.B.E.

I know a fellow of twenty-three,
Who got a job with a fat M.P. —
(Not caring much for the Infantry.)
And he — thank God! — has the O.B.E.

I had a friend; a friend, and he
Just held the line for you and me,
And kept the Germans from the sea,
And died — without the O.B.E.

Thank God!

He died without the O.B.E.

* "O.B.E." — Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire

Prime Minister David Lloyd George raised money for the Liberal Party by giving various honours to people who donated money to the party. (Nowadays they only have to make loans.) An O.B.E. went for about a hundred pounds. "Lloyd George knew my father, Father knew Lloyd George . . ." sung to the tune of "Onward Christian Soldiers", proving that we didn't invent filk, either.

Fear of Reason: Science fiction is transforming; the events of the book make a change in the world. Mainstream fiction is normalizing; whatever change the events of the book make do not change the world, whether they are undone, or trivial. Thus, the Mary Higgins Clark book I read while stuck in Pembroke, about the murder and defamation of a man who had developed a powerful anti-cancer drug, is science-fictional, because the book ends with the man being posthumously vindicated, and his drug shown to be effective. Whereas Clive Cussler's Dirk Pitt novels are mainstream, because what happens in each novel does not even effect the next one.

The most egregious example of that normalizing is of course Michael Crichton's *Sphere* which ends with the characters undoing everything that happened, and the wish-granting title item as well.

Attention, Nation of Ribbon Clerks: You know that the con's announcement that horizontal ribbons are to be used will guarantee that there will be many many vertical ones.

Eyepatch Fandom: What got me hooked on this was Frank G. Slaughter's *The Deadly Lady of Madagascar* — yes, a fifties novel. In spite of being a religious man (checking his name will turn up a substantial number of religious historical novels) he knew how to make swashbuckling thrillers work, namely by showing the women naked. Usually in his books there's the Bad Girl, who the hero has before she dies, and the Good Girl, who he then marries. In *The Deadly Lady of Madagascar* they are the same woman, the daughter of a pirate king. Her father is named Jonathan Carter, and there were times when I wondered if Dejah Thoris knew that her husband had been married before and had a son. Anyhow, Bonnie

Carter the pirate turns out to be a damn fine shot, a first-rate sea handler, a bold leader of men, and of course a passionate lover. Who says they didn't have female role models in the fifties? Oh, and she swims naked. See above.

Trek Anniversary: LACon will have writers speaking and fans taking part. This is definitely not Creation-Con. It's not MidAmeriCon, either.

Robert Lichtman

The article by Roger Ebert in that recent *Asimov's* reminiscing about his time as an active fan also appears as the introduction to *Best of Xero*, a book published in hardcover back in 2004 and in trade paper last year. If you're not familiar with it, I highly recommend you seek out a copy. It's got lots of good stuff that's not in *All In Color For A Dime*, which was also material originally published in *Xero*.

Regarding Michael Crichton's *State of Fear* being about "global warming and climate change" and how Crichton gets it all wrong, one has to actively wonder if he received a sizable stipend from Exxon/Mobil.

Looking at the list of Rotsler Award winners so far, I can't help but suggest that Dan Steffan is as deserving of such recognition as those who've already been honored.

In his CascadiaCon report, John Hertz writes in connection with the art show, "Ed Cox had begun to work in steel, displaying skull shapes like flat masks." Do I correctly assume that this is a *different* EdCo than the one for whom space used to be left in fanzines for doodling (and who passed away some years ago)?

Joseph Major writes that on a visit to Hagerstown he "drove by Harry Warner's house; the door was open, and workmen were going in and out. The place looked a little dilapidated. We didn't stop and get out; perhaps we should have." It's my understanding that the house sold several years ago for a little over \$100,000 and underwent considerable renovation. Checking a useful home value Web site (zillow.com) I find its estimated value now to be around \$215,000. No doubt all traces of its former occupant have been erased.

Chris Garcia writes, "If the Google scanning project can hook up with UC Riverside and do the scans of all the fanzines there, that would be a wonderful resource, and one that would lead to more folks discovering fanzines." Indeed it would be, but a lot of those fanzines are so delicate that surgical tools are called for to remove the staples (I

know this from my own collection) -- and beyond that, it would be helpful if someone knowledgeable hooked up with the Google project to steer them in the direction of which fanzines would be most worthy of scanning first. On other aspects of the Google project, however, I agree with those who have copyright concerns.

I don't have Sheryl Birkhead's e-mail address, and if you do would you please inform her that a Bookfinder.com search for Terry Carr's *Fandom Harvest* shows a solid handful of copies available at prices ranging from \$11.95 to \$27.50.

Joy V. Smith

Lovely dragon cover! And I enjoyed the illos, including Fandom isn't grayin'--it's jus' gettin' really, really ripe, and the Rot-sler collection.

I enjoyed your wildlife and the neighborhood bunny stories. Here we have neighbors whose mare and donkey periodically escape and are rounded up by us, sheriff's deputies, etc. We put them behind the nearest fence and hold them for the neighbors, whom we've gotten to know also.

Your news updates are always interesting; it's a shame about the art being erased in the West Hollywood Palm Restaurant! And thanks for the mention of Ebert's fanish memoir in *Asimov's*; I wasn't aware of his background in fandom. Btw, a friend's poem, "Widow of the Android-Robot Time Wars", is scheduled for the September *Asimov's*; and Michael F. Flynn has a short story upcoming in the October/November *Asimov's*—"Dawn, and Sunset, and the Colours of the Earth"--to which a number of people who frequent his AOL SF Authors folder contributed. (Hopefully, I'm in there, but I know he had to edit. You should see the whole thread! It's a lot of fun.)

Thanks to Taral for tackling the archiving of *Energumen* and other fanzines online and on CD. All the best in those projects! Interesting look at global warming and Crichton's *State of Fear* by Gregory Benford and Martin Hoffer. The pirates piece was good too; yep, you don't hear about Rafael Sabatini much nowadays. I think they made movies from at least two of his books?

Thanks to John Hertz and James Bacon for their con reports. The Cyberdrome workshop and other fun con events certainly kept people entertained. And thank you for the Hugo list of nominees and all the news tidbits.

I learn lots in the locs, especially the hurricane and WSFA background in this issue. (Locally I got to play with a couple Bassett hounds visiting from New Orleans

while their family worked on their home there; they're home now, though the 3 foot rule slowed their rebuilding process down and I haven't had a recent update.) I was grateful to read Keith Lynch's and Ted White's versions of the WSFA happenings because everything I'd heard before had given me a negative opinion of Ted White. (I'm so not in the loop.)

Tim Marion

Thanks so much for *File 770:147*, which I just received today --- chock-full of indispensable news written with your usual verve and élan (if that's the right word) which keeps one reading even if one (on very rare occasion) doesn't have that much interest in the subject matter. Lovely front and back covers! Also thanks for reprinting the Schirmeister art inside.

Thank you so much for reprinting the Greg Benford article, "Fear of Reason." I had wondered what the story was behind Michael Crichton claiming that global warming, which is self-evident, is a myth. The pity here is that since Crichton is a popular entertainer (i.e., writer), people are likely to take him seriously.

Ted White responds to such seemingly acrimonious remarks from Alexis Gilliland that I'm surprised I actually don't remember reading these original, and apparently inspirational, remarks. Without making any attempt to get involved in an argument which I know absolutely nothing about, I will say that nonetheless it's not very difficult to take sides on this. Ted White and Keith Lynch present themselves well.

I see that Ted White also has some good art in this issue. Oh! Now I see. That stands for "Taral Wayne"...

Thanks for the con reports with all the photos. John Dowd is a name that I haven't seen in almost 35 years.

Thanks also for the obituaries. In some cases, such as Rita Coriell, it seems as though I am finding out about great fans only after they have left us. I would have written you about Brian Burley, but I figured others knew him better than me and that you would already know about it anyway. I do think it should be mentioned that he was a fan since the early 60s (which is a rather significant length of time).

You needn't go to such elaborate lengths to explain the packaging on your child's dolls, when you say that "They came inside a molded, see-through plastic shell, each bound to the cardboard liner by an aluminum wire around her neck and ankles. Her long hair was stitched to the backing." Just call it a blister pack. Nonetheless, you have

my sympathies. This has been a frequent pain for me as well, especially for about the last dozen years, ever since McFarlane Toys started making their elaborate "Spawn" action figures. These figures are much sturdier (usually) and more detailed than action figures from other companies, both before and since, in my opinion. They were irresistible to me; I had to collect them. McFarlane came out with many lines (series) of action figures; almost 30 altogether at last count. I have frequently collected hero, monster, and most frequently (which I suppose shows how deprived, or more likely deprived, I am) the heroine figures. For some reason, the latter aren't that much in demand, but of course they're my favorite --- usually exotic warrior women. Nowadays I get them only if they're fully articulated (poseable at the elbows and knees as well as the hips and shoulders and necks) and if they have "real" fake hair (usually dyed camel hair) rather than that molded wavy "helmet" that keeps the character from being able to turn her head.

Anyway, opening these ghoshawful packages has especially become a pain in the last few years, as I progress thru middle age. I have to take off my glasses in order to be able to see what I'm doing when I'm untwisting those little twisted, plastic-coated wires. Then I have to hope my eyes aren't poked in the meantime by a weapon or some other threatening protuberance from the figure. I'm sure my complaining about my old age should be a concern for those such as yourself who no doubt recall my being so much younger...

What I meant to say about the WSFS disagreement (I don't want to call it a "feud") is that Ted White's and Keith Lynch's letters are fairly consistent with each other, which might tend to lend them a certain degree of verisimilitude (whatever that it is).

And that's it for the moment. Thanks not only for the zine but your receptivity.

Murray Moore

The subject line is an untruth. I doubt that this response will be long enough to qualify as a LoC.

I am grateful every time that I see in *File 770* a Canfield cartoon or illustration from your stash of his art. I wish that he was still making art for fanzines.

I am grateful that Brad Foster continues to be a prolific contributor of art to fanzines. Dragon art can be deadly, but Brad's art on the cover of this is compelling to this viewer. I marvel at the detail and at the number of hours Brad must have spent mak-

ing it, to give away.

Your supply of Rotsler art I expect only seems infinite.

And the small Tim Kirk illo adorning your editorial: not a great example of Kirk work, but welcome. Is it recent? If I was publishing and I had the chance to use Kirk art, I would nudge, "C'mon, Tim, give me some of your good stuff!"

Lloyd Penney

I've downloaded issue 147 of *File 770*...feels odd to do it, seeing I'm usually cracking open a paperzine here, but that's fine...it's the contents that are the most important. Here goes...

Oooooooooo, wait 'til I get my hands on that waaaaabit...around here, the animals that have the greatest chance of walking through an open patio door are squirrels, raccoons and skunks. Of the three, I can honestly say that the only one I haven't had on my lap is a raccoon.

I would like to see another Boston-Badenzine arrive sometime...I think Chaz was working on the third issue when he suffered that catastrophic hard-drive failure. When Yvonne and I did our CUFF trip report some years ago, we claimed our bounty of \$500 from SCIFI, but they later made the decision that these trip reports had to be TAFF or DUFF based, and not from a minor fan fund.

Any bookstores that open around here are hobby shops, usually funded with a second income. My favorite right now is just south of us on Lakeshore Blvd. in the far south end of Etobicoke, the Used Book Paradise, and we've done business with them for a few years now. I rarely go to the big-box book stores, mainly because there's usually some store clerk creeping up behind you to ask if you need help, and in some places, there's so much other merchandise available, you might think that books were a sideline.

Corflu 23 in Toronto was small but fun. Once Murray Moore recounted everything, I found I'd come in second for Best Letterhack behind Robert Lichtman. Pleased I am, but know that I've got to do better.

The existence of Trufen.net makes it difficult to wait for a newszine to make this public, but...Mike Glicksohn is still fighting cancer. The cancer that was in his ureter has now spread to his bladder. His e-mail detailing this was titled Another Damned Bridge, and we are sure he'll cross that when he gets to it. (At his annual Mikecon birthday party, he showed off his high school graduation photo. The idea of Michael Glicksohn without a beard just coggles the mind.)

The Benford/Hoffert essay highlights the American government attitude to global warming that just astonishes the rest of the world...that the Bush regime will not embrace Kyoto because it will hurt the US economy, which totally ignores the fact that damage to our ecosystem will damage our civilization, a lot more important than losing a few dollars. The Canadian government, now more in line with Bush, is also ignoring Kyoto, but this government will not last for much longer, IMHO, and perhaps we can all start looking to the long-term future of our planet, and not be so short-sighted.

A shame about the passing of Howard DeVore, and now Frankie Thomas. The LAcon committee must feel a little picked on, and Connie and James must be a little nervous...well done to Marc Schirmeister for the 2005 Rotsler Award. I have always enjoyed his work, in fanzines and in TV cartoons. (Yes, I have noticed the fleeting end credits.)

All the TAFF fuss has been settled, and Bridge Bradshaw is the winner. She and husband Simon are plotting all kinds of travels in North America, including a visit to Toronto for a pubnight. I haven't seen Andrew Porter's birthday list since the last time I purchased a Science Fiction Chronicle. Add me in as 6/2/59.

Update on Bastards of Kirk...my taping is done for the movie, and it will have its premiere at Toronto Trek 20, same place where the Auroras will be handed out this year, in just a couple of weeks. Yes, I got to do an outrageous Scottish accent. Jimmy Doohan, rest his soul, would have been proud of me. The convention has belatedly invited Yvonne to attend the convention as a minor guest, to honour her as the convention's founder back in 1986. They intend to honour all past chairmen for their 20th convention, but Yvonne will get a little more.

Good to hear Steve 40 got his reproductive equipment working at the Westcon...take that as you will. It would have been great to see the same at Corflu this year. In my loc, Gaylaxicon 2006 was a popular success, in spite of declining numbers of fans, who I think did not want to cross the border. Yvonne is the treasurer, and should have some information soon on whether the con was a financial success. Yvonne did get to LA for the ISDC, and she did get to a LASFS meeting. We've found the pictures of her from that meeting on Chaz Boston-Baden's website.

I remember asking this question during the run-up to LAcon III, which I never did get to, and I will ask it again. I wonder if anyone who is working the LAcon IV dealers' room has asked the LA County Coroners' Office if they would like to sell their

marvelous merchandise there. If not, we are planning to be in LA a few days early; perhaps we can just go and purchase a few goodies.

Two pages is pretty good, so I'll end it here. Just a couple of months to go until the Worldcon, so I will see you there.

John Purcell

Brit-fans being tapped as Officers of the British Empire sounds like a rather odd development, but wotthehell; why not? My congratulations to Leroy Kettle. If Dave Langford and/or Dave Locke ever get knighted, I think the Queen might be getting a bit daft.

By all means, keep us updated on Mike Glicksohn's condition. I know that trufen.net will beat you to the punch, but not everyone goes there. That note about his being honored at the next ConFusion is sweet news. Perfect Attendance at any con is astonishing. I know that Ted White has attended every Corflu thus far, but has Forry Ackerman been to every WorldCon? My curiosity has been piqued, and I can't think of anybody else who could make that claim. Speaking of which, has anybody out there in your reading audience kept track of consecutive WorldCons attended? It would be an interesting footnote in the program book.

Many thanks for the listing of Hugo nominations that I have never read or heard of. Or even seen, come to think of it. The only categories I feel qualified to vote in are the Fan Hugos, and I won't even be voting this year, which is sad because I simply cannot afford even a supporting membership. Congratulations on the Best Fanzine nod, Mike. All of the nominees in the fan categories are so good this year that I don't know who or what to vote for. I take that back a bit; just because he's won so many years in a row, I wouldn't vote for Dave Langford (Sorry, Dave!). It's time to honor somebody else now. I mean, I do like Dave's writing and him as a person, but enough is enough; this year I'm pulling for Claire Briailey. In My Humble Opinion, she's the best fan writer of the nominees if you throw out Dave.

Maybe the WSFS should place a limit on the number of consecutive times a person can win an award. Or maybe not. I dunno. It just seems to me that Dave's string of Fan Writer Hugos is very, very long. Maybe he should withdraw his name from future nominations. I seem to recall others doing this back in the late 70s.

Marc Schirmeister has always been one of my favorite fan artists, and he deserves the 2005 Rotsler Award. How many years

has Marc been cranking out such quality work? Hard to pin down. Congratulations, Marc!

Hard to believe that it was 40 years ago that Star Trek first whooshed across our television screens. I barely remember watching it the first time around. But, man, what an impression those two and a half seasons made. I wish I could be at LosCon IV; the programming items sound like a lot of fun.

Great lettercolumn with lots of interesting letters, but there's nothing I really feel moved to comment upon. Nothing bad about that; I just didn't feel moved to respond to any letters this time around.

I totally loved the back cover art. Now this is fun stuff! Plus the execution is impeccable.

We Also Heard From

David Thayer: I was shocked -- shocked, I tell you -- to read that, according to Fred Smith, a fantasy novel "hgad" won the 2005 Hugo. I was horrified to read further that it was quite "legitimatre" (the definition of which is a "real mother").

[[I know Fred Smith must have been just as excited about all the typos I added to his letter. Now what is the French word for 'copyediting'?]]

Taral's take on why he has never won a fan artist Hugo is the funniest thing I've ever read--because it's true.

In the delightfully talented Marc Schirmeister, the Rotsler Award judges have found another worthy recipient.

Henry Welch: I think the real question in regard to the "wild kingdom" is why someone doesn't just get the screen door fixed?

[[We have, now that I am finished milking the problem for fanzine material...]]

Steven Silver: Received the current issue of F770 today. I'm going to chalk it up to your well-honed sense of irony that you misspelled my first name on page 32 when writing about my observation that Frederik Pohl's name had been misspelled in the Columbia College newspaper.

Andrew Porter: On the new issue, the Rog Ebert article you mention was actually the introduction he wrote to "The Best of Xero", published two years ago by San Francisco's Tachyon Publications. On the Brithday list, gee whiz, put my name in smaller type, wouldja? Another good issue.

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L.A.con IV Presents Three "Special Committee Awards" Betty Ballantine, Harlan Ellison, Fred Patten Receive Overdue Recognition

[[From the committee's press release]]

One of the tasks - as well as a point of pride -- for each year's World Science Fiction Convention Committee is to administer and present the Hugo Awards. It's also a requisite of Worldcon committees that they can, if they so choose, present Special Committee Awards to individuals or groups they feel deserving of special recognition.

L.A.con IV, the 64th World Science Fiction Convention, chose to present three such awards.

At the Guest of Honor Speeches on Thursday evening, August 24th, the second evening of the convention, Christian McGuire presented Fred Patten with a Special Committee Award.

The plaque read "Fred Patten, in celebration of a lifetime of service to Fandom". Over several decades Fred has been a mainstay of Los Angeles Fandom and the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society (LASFS) in particular, but beyond his local involvement, he has been an active participant nationally and internationally in Fanzine Fandom, Club Fandom, Convention Fandom,

Comics Fandom, and more. He is well-known as the father of Anime and Anime Fandom in North America, almost single-handedly introducing and popularizing Japanese animation here. Fred thanked the committee and the convention's attendees, expressed his pleasure at still being able to attend conventions and hoped to continue attending as well as continuing his other fannish activities for a long time to come.

On Saturday, August 26th, at the Hugo Awards Ceremony, two more Special Committee Awards were presented.

After she presented the Best Editor category Hugo Award, Betty Ballantine was surprised when her friend and "discovery", L.A.con IV Artist Guest of Honor James Gurney came onto the stage and beckoned her to stay. On behalf of L.A.con IV, he presented Betty with a plaque that read "Betty Ballantine, for a lifetime of effort and service to bring the best of science fiction and fantasy to the world". Betty Ballantine has been one of the top editors and publishers in the science fiction field almost since it was born as a publishing category and one of its most under-recognized. She was involved with the founding and operation of Bantam Books, Ballantine Books, Peacock Press and more. She is known for discovering and nurturing countless authors and artists, and with bringing the first "authorized" editions of "The Lord of the Rings" to the United States. Betty seemed extremely pleased with her award and told the thousands assembled of her love for the field, for her work, and for all of them.

Later during the Hugo Ceremony, Harlan Ellison presented the Hugo for the Best Short Story and was likewise kept on stage afterward in order to receive a surprise award. The plaque, presented by L.A.con IV Writer Guest of Honor and Hugo Ceremony Master of Ceremonies Connie Willis, read "Harlan Ellison, in celebration of 50 years as a professional science fiction author". Harlan Ellison has been an active practitioner of our field's craft for half a century, long enough that most fans cannot recall a time when he wasn't one of the top writers in the field. Harlan reminded the audience that he's still working and still has works coming out. This award, he wanted us to know, is a marker, not an end.

This fiftieth anniversary award echoed a similar award presented to Robert Bloch at L.A.con II in 1984, on the occasion of his 50th anniversary as a professional author.

L.A.con IV was pleased to recognize these people for their past - and, we hope, future - efforts on behalf of science fiction, its fandom and its literature.

Send John Hertz to Japan



Japanese character *hana* • calligraphy by Seihou Mikado

HANA

Hertz Across to Nippon Alliance

A one-time trip fund
for sending John to Nippon2007
the first World Science Fiction Convention in Asia
Yokohama, August 30 – September 3, 2007
and bringing him home

*poet fanwriter art lover dance teacher friend of costumers conversationalist
Big Heart Award 2003*

Please make donations payable to Janice Murray
Mail to her at P.O. Box 75684, Seattle, WA 98175 U.S.A.

Any unspent money will be given equally to the Down Under Fan Fund ("DUFF"),
the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund ("TAFF"), and the Get Up-and-over Fan Fund ("GUFF")

This fund was started by Murray Moore at L.A.con IV, the 2006 Worldcon
<http://sjhtn2007.livejournal.com> • sjhtnippon2007@yahoo.ca

The Japanese word *hana* ("flower") is much used in poetry. Yes, the calligrapher's family has heard jokes for a long time about their name *Mikado*.

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