

# FILE 770 - 158



## Editorial Notes by Mike Glycer

**File 770 Gets a Hugo Nomination:** Wow. After paying such close attention to the Hugo rules changes the last thing I was expecting to happen was for genuine fanzines to take five out of six spots on the final ballot. I certainly thank everyone who helped make *File 770* one of them.

In 2010 there were 298 nominating votes cast in the Best Fanzine category, about 16% more than last year. Aussiecon 4 set a new record for Hugo nominating votes, so it's hard to guess whether the uptick in the Best Fanzine category just part of the overall increase, or happened in response to either the rules change opening the category to blogs and websites, or to the campaign to get *StarShipSofa* nominated.

Greater change may follow in 2011 after voters see this year's nominating statistics and know which ones will benefit from a push. When you look over all the Hugo categories, the importance of constituencies and identity groups in producing votes is self-evident.

**Heinlein's Tea for Two:** I was feeling especially civic-minded after spending a week blogging about Peter Watts' trial. I've always intended to read Robert A. Heinlein's *Take Back Your Government* eventually anyway so I decided to do it now. He might help me think about a citizen's response to events like this. So I set out to order a copy.

First I went to Amazon.com. Three vendors were willing to sell me the 1992 paperback for \$52. Others were willing to let me pay a lot more. Outrageous! Because I know these are not autographed copies. (Sherlock Holmes could not have deduced that more quickly.)

Then I remembered someone had written during last year's campaign that Baen might reissue the book. What had they done since then? I checked the Baen website. Good news. *Take Back Your Government* was available as an e-book for just \$5. A sweet deal, because Baen offers its e-books in multiple formats. I'd be able to load a copy on my Kindle.

There was an option to buy Heinlein's book separately or bundled together with a book called *Taxpayers Tea Party* for \$10. Why would I want that? So I hit the purchase button to order the Heinlein e-book. The shopping cart screen appeared — but it was empty. Well, I must have done something wrong. I worked my way back to the page with the purchase button and hit it once more. The shopping cart screen came back empty again.

The third time I tried clicking on the Heinlein/Tea Party bundle. This time the shopping cart showed my order. I said Aha! and started having conspiratorial thoughts. But because I'd have happily paid \$10 just to get the Heinlein book, I rationalized going through with the purchase.

And I thought, I'm going to blog about this.

The next morning I started wondering if I'd really just done something dumb? I've been happy buying from Baen all along. I'd hate to



Before a preview performance of his play *2116*, **Ray Bradbury** shows the audience the medal he received in 2007 from the French government appointing him a Commander in the Order of the Arts and Letters.

criticize them if it was my fault. So I returned to the Baen site and tried ordering a single copy of *Take Back Your Government*. And you know what? It worked perfectly the first time.

So I guess I just did something dumb. I will not get to name this editorial "Take Back My Merchandise." Which just kills me.

**File 770**  
**158**

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**Cheryl Morgan Refused  
Entry to US**

Fans expressed outrage that Cheryl Morgan was denied entry to the United States when she landed at San Francisco International Airport on March 13 and placed on a return flight to England by Customs & Border Patrol authorities.

Many overseas fans commented that this is another reason not to come to U.S. conventions, which is not hard to understand -- U.S. fans also feel burdened by the country's security measures.

However, Cheryl explained online, "Contrary to much of the speculation, this has little to do with anti-terror legislation and the like. It has been caused mainly by the fact that US immigration is the provenance of two separate government organizations — the State Department and Customs & Border Patrol — and in my case they don't appear to have communicated very well.

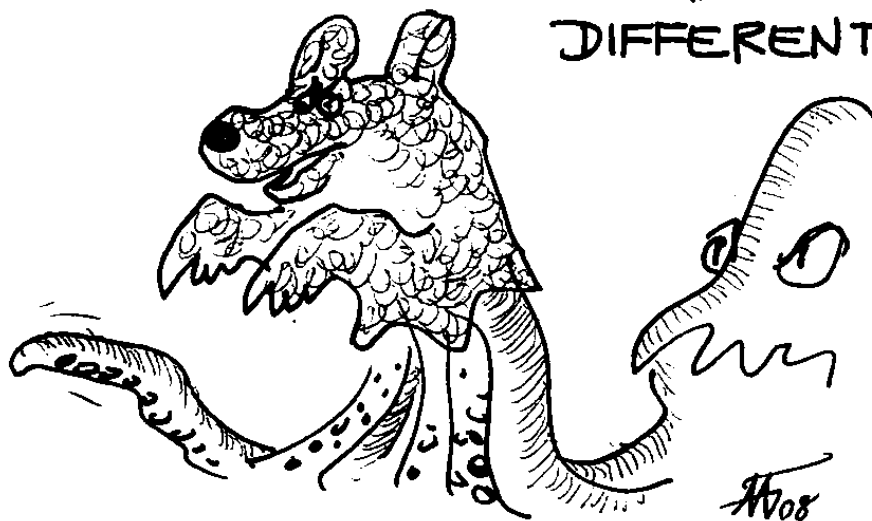
"As I result I appear to have inadvertently contravened the regulations, and therefore I will never again be able to use the visa waiver program. Nothing can be done about this.... Online outrage, letter writing campaigns and the like will not have any positive effect on my situation, so please don't waste your time and energy."

CBP's action, besides keeping Cheryl from attending the 2010 International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts, rendered her temporarily homeless and she unexpectedly had to find a long-term living situation in the UK.

Cheryl has contended with U.S. authorities over her visa for a couple of years, dealing with two agencies, Customs and Border Protection (CBP, part of the Department of Homeland Security) and the Department of State, which have slightly different definitions of what they will accept and somewhat different interpretations of the rules.

Kevin Standlee explained on the *File 770* blog: "CBP [told Cheryl] more or less, 'You should get a visa because you're coming and going so often.' Note that she was staying strictly within the published rules and regulations; someone at CBP simply didn't like the

WHY IS THIS BEAR MARKET  
DIFFERENT?



**News of Fandom**

fact that she was coming to the USA so often.

"When she went to State to get a visa, they told her, 'You don't need a visa to come and go for those reasons, so don't submit that application,' and thus she withdrew the application.

"Working from State's reassurances, Cheryl came to the US a couple of more times without much more than the usual border-crossing inspection, which seemed to reinforce State's interpretation.

"But this time CBP apparently decided to bounce her...which makes her ineligible for the visa waiver scheme in the future.

"Whether this will change State's mind about whether she should apply for the visa that more or less duplicates the class of people who come on Visa Waiver is an open question at this time.

"But again, the key issue is that the two agencies' agendas and definitions and interpretations are sufficiently different that Cheryl has been caught in the gears. Anyone who travels on the visa waiver scheme a lot

should be concerned about this, in my opinion."

**Aussiecon 4 Breaks  
Hugo Nominations Record**

Aussiecon 4 received a record-breaking haul of Hugo nominations — 864. That surpasses Torcon 3's record 805 (2003) and drops Anticipation's 799 (2009) into third place reports Aussiecon 4 Hugo Administrator Vincent Docherty.

**Hertz Is 2010 DUFF Delegate**

John Hertz is the winner of the 2010 Down Under Fan Fund. He led an extraordinarily large field of candidates who were vying to become North America's delegate to Aussiecon 4. The other nominees were Jeffrey Boman, Terry Fong & Jannie Shea, Melanie Herz and John Purcell.

Administrators Steve and Sue Francis report that 131 votes were cast. The number of ballots by country/region was: Australia,

**2010 Down Under Fan Fund Runoff**

Candidate	Boman	Fong/Shea	John Hertz	Melanie Herz	Purcell	Hold Over Funds	No Pref	Total
<b>1st Place</b>	7	19	48	24	30	1	2	131
<b>2nd Round</b>	-	22	49	25	32	-	-	-
<b>3rd Round</b>	-	-	54	32	36	-	-	-
<b>4th Round</b>	-	-	73	-	47	-	-	-

### Shields Wins 2010 GUFF Race

James Shields outpolled Douglas Spencer in the 2010 GUFF race. He will attend Aussiecon 4 in September.

Candidate	Shields	Spencer	Hold Over Funds	No Pref	Total
Europe	38	32	0	7	77
Australasia	11	4	0	3	18
Rest of the World	4	1	0	0	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

18; Canada, 18; Europe, 5; USA, 90.

### TAFF Winners Announced

Anne KG Murphy and Brian Gray were selected as North American TAFF delegates and attended the British Eastercon, Odyssey 2010.

The vote count was: Anne KG Murphy / Brian Gray, 49 first-place votes; Frank Wu, 30; No preference, 13; Hold over funds, 3.

### Lacey Wins CUFF

Diane Lacey has won the 2010 Canadian Unity Fan Fund, the first contested CUFF race since 2003. She'll be going to Keycon 27 in May.

There were 40 votes cast according to, LeAmber Raven Kensley, last year's CUFF delegate and the fund administrator. She said it was a close race but hasn't posted the voting totals.

The runner-up was Rob Uhrig, a member

of the Klingon Assault Group (KAG/Kanada).

Lacey was a member of the Montreal Worldcon committee and helped administer the 2009 Hugo Awards.

### Mike Glicksohn Medical Update

Mike Glicksohn, unfortunately, is still in treatment for cancer. The results of his November 23 cystoscopy came back positive for "high grade cancer cells." So more biopsies were done in January, which the doctor said indicated the cancer was in the prostate but not the bladder and therefore could be treated with another series of bladder/prostate flushings (which Mike has been through twice before.)

Mike had his fifth and penultimate flushing treatment on March 24. He wrote friends afterwards:

"My doctor suggested the current discomfort I've been feeling is probably a direct result of the treatment being successful and stripping away the lining of my bladder/prostate. But he took a urine sample to test just in case.

"Then he called up on a computer the cat-scan he'd sent me for two weeks ago. As he'd been in Mexico last week he was seeing it for the first time.

"The good news? My remaining kidney (which was why he'd scheduled the scan) seems fine.

"The bad news? There were two places on the scan that he didn't like the look of. Didn't like in a big way. Didn't understand, in fact, and hadn't ever seen before. He said I was a conundrum. (I don't think that means I'm okay for safe sex.)

"One is a small gray blob where there ought not be anything at all. The other is the top of my left hipbone which even to my untutored eye was distinctly different (in a negative way) from the top of my right hipbone. One or both or neither could be cancerous. So he's going to schedule more x-rays and use them to decide if a biopsy (or two) is necessary.

"When I know the results of any additional tests or operations, I'll let you know."

### Bill Warren Out of Hospital

Bill Warren, author of *Keep Watching the Skies, 21st Century Edition*, is home after a series of hospital visits. Doctors performed a biopsy, did surgery to remove scar tissue from his left lung, and treated various complications including draining accumulated fluid from his left lung. He's recovering with care from his wife, Beverly, and a visiting home health care nurse.

### Geis Eye Surgery

Celebrated fanzine publisher Richard E. Geis had cataract surgery on his left eye in February. He wrote online afterwards, "My eye surgery seems to have gone well, but must wait weeks for the eye to fully heal before getting new glasses."

### Master El Doing Better

It's been almost a year since my last story on Elliot Shorter. Through Facebook I've learned he has been getting around more and is feeling better. Master El looked particularly elegant in his Society for Creative Anachronism attire at the Black Rose Ball on February 6.

During the fall he attended the Bridge Birthday Party in Hope Valley, Rhode Island and even took charge of one side in a board game played with living pieces:

"Later in the evening, El climbed the long, steep stairs to the second floor — with the help of the 'brute squad' — to take part in the traditional bout of live *alquerque* (an ancestor of checkers and chess, and one of the oldest known board games). El took one side of the tabletop board, and Josef the other, while a host of local lords and ladies took to the carefully marked-up floor to play out their moves, stylishly sweeping the opposing pieces off the board. Three games were played ... and the final score was a tie, with one win for El, one for his opponent, and one draw."

### Fans Help B5 Pin Artist

In December Elana Kestrel was fighting Stage 4 cancer and needed to raise funds by selling her inventory of Babylon 5 "jumpgate" pins.

Years ago she created a set of pins containing B5 fans' ASCII "jumpgate" symbol that even the show's creator, J. Michael Straczynski, praised. He told her in a 1995 email "...it's quite nice. By all means, good luck, looks terrific." At the time Kestrel thought, "It is great to know that this Pin had passed THE most difficult quality test possible within the B5 fan world."

At Kestrel's website [Jumpgatepins.com](http://Jumpgatepins.com)



Elliot Shorter at the Black Rose Ball. (Photo by Jason Taylor.)



Jumpgate pin artist **Elana Kestrel** thanks all the fans who came to her aid.

you can see the pins online and order them via email.

The artist was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2007. She was treated in Portland, Oregon and later moved to Southern Nevada. Within two years the cancer came back and now has spread to the liver. When she made her appeal the tumor was showing signs of being under control but she was having trouble affording proper food, medicine, and basic living expenses.

Fandom responded generously, buying enough pins to make a big difference in her ability to afford immediate chemo treatment. In January she thanked everyone, and reported some progress in her fight against cancer:

"At my most recent oncology visit on January 19, I learned that the chemotherapy had been effective in starting to shrink the tumor. Before you guys came through for me I was afraid that I would have to delay my chemotherapy for an indefinite time because I did not have the funds to move to a safe place for a good recovery. Because of the SF online community came through during a very difficult time, I now get to hope for a much brighter future."

### **Jerry Weist Being Treated**

When Jerry Weist notified his client list about a new e-Bay auction, he also shared the latest information about his cancer treatment. The *Scoop* reported in March:

"...Weist told his email client list that this will be his last eBay auction prior to entering

a stem-cell transplant procedure later this Spring/Summer to fight cancer.

"Many of you have sent your thoughts on my cancer," he wrote. "I'm extremely grateful to have such a great client base. Right now I am half way through. All soft tumors are cured, my doctors are working on a new chemo (Cytosin) to get my bone marrow count down so that I may enter stem-cell transplant, so hang in there with me! I may yet survive this battle. I may enter stem cell in May or June!"

Weist is the author of *Bradbury: An Illustrated Life*, *The Comic Art Price Guide*, and *The Art of Frank R. Paul*. From 1990 to 2001 he was a consultant at Sotheby's specializing in popular culture, overseeing the auction of Sam Moskowitz's collection.

### **North(west) To Alaska**

Fans will be aboard Royal Caribbean's *Rhapsody of the Seas* when it departs Seattle next July 16 for a week spent visiting ports of call along Alaska's Inside Passage.

Shawn Marier, Northwest Science Fiction Society Vice-Chairman, told the Smofs list fans are welcome to join the 30 club members and other people already going. "The low end rooms are about \$900 pp/do, which includes all meals. We made sure the dates should work for people who are planning on going to Westercon and/or Worldcon next summer."

Further information about NWSFS plans for the cruise can be obtained by e-mailing NWSFS at [info@nwsfs.org](mailto:info@nwsfs.org). Rooms can be booked through travel agent Barbara Marsh at 425-637-9214 or her email [barbmarsh@aaawin.com](mailto:barbmarsh@aaawin.com).

### **Patrick Stewart Lands in Knight Club**

Now he's Sir Patrick Stewart. The Queen's New Year's Honours list upgraded the actor to a knighthood.

As part of the year 2001 awards, Stewart received an OBE or Order of the British Empire. The status of these honors descends from knighthood to CBE, MBE and OBE. Knights use the title Sir, and those awarded the British Empire titles may use the letters after their names.

### **Anticipation Is Makin' Me Wait**

Actually the waiting is over! Chris Garcia has posted the highly entertaining *Fanzine Cover In An Hour* featuring art improvised at Anticipation by Taral, Marc Schirmeister and Steve Stiles.

The zine's official title is rather longer and here is Chris' explanation of how he

ended up with "Go Drop Dead" *An Anticipation Fanzine in an Hour...kinda* –

"The theme for the art, which I got from the audience was...tentacles and airships! It did my heart good, being such a fan of both Cthuhlu and Steampunk. I asked folks for a suggestion for a title, particularly bothering Marc [Schirmeister], who told me to 'Go Drop Dead.' That is how titles are made!

In one of several short articles between the drawings of tentacles and airships Chris Garcia pays tribute to *poutine*, a Canadian comfort food that may possibly taste good but does not photograph well. It looked a lot scarier than all those sketches of Cthulhu.

### **2010 Compton Crook Nominees**

Nominees for the 2010 Compton Crook/Stephen Tall Award presented by the Baltimore Science Fiction Society are:

*The Windup Girl* by Paolo Bacigalupi

*Dying Bites* by D.D. Barant

*Soulless* by Gail Carriger

*Johannes Cabal, the Necromancer* by Jonathan L. Howard

The winner gets his/her way paid to Balticon for two years, and receives a plaque and \$1000. Balticon takes place May 28-31, 2010.

The Compton Crook Award is presented to the best of the first novels published each year in the field of Science Fiction, Fantasy, or Horror. Selection is by vote of the BSFS





**Corflu Cobalt** group photo engineered by Mike Scott. See page 8 for FAAn Award winners.

membership. The Award is named for science fiction author Compton Crook, who used the *nom de plume* Stephen Tall. Compton Crook died in 1981. The award was first given in 1983.

### 2010 SFRA Awards

The winners of the Science Fiction Research Association awards for 2010 are:

**Pilgrim Award** (for lifetime contributions to sf & f studies): Eric Rabkin

**Pioneer Award** (for the most outstanding sf studies essay of the year): Allison de Fren, "The Anatomical Gaze in Tomorrow's Eve," published in *Science Fiction Studies* No. 108, Vol. 36 (2), July 2009: 235-265)

**Clareson Award** (for distinguished service): David Mead

**Mary Kay Bray Award** (for the best essay, interview, or extended review in the past year's SFRA Review): Ritch Calvin, "Mundane SF 101"

**Student Paper Award** (for the best paper presented at the previous year's SFRA conference): Andrew Ferguson, "Such Delight in Bloody Slaughter: R. A. Lafferty and the Dismemberment of the Body Grotesque"

### Anticipation Honors Pass-Along Agreement

Congratulations to the Anticipation committee for promptly settling the finances of the 2009 Worldcon and sharing out its surplus funds to future Worldcons.

The initial checks were delivered at Smofcon to Aussiecon 4 and Renovation,

with an equal amount reserved for the next Worldcon to adopt the pass-along policy (maybe the winning 2012 bid.)

René Walling, who co-chaired with Robbie Bourget, announced that the amount each of the three Worldcons involved has or will receive US\$22,500.

The pass-along policy is a commitment to distribute at least one-half of a Worldcon's surplus to the next three Worldcons that make the same promise.

Just how large was Anticipation's surplus? The details aren't due to be released until financial reports are submitted at Aussiecon 4. A con may pass on more than 50% if it chooses, of course, though I have never seen a report of it happening. If the Anticipation committee has followed the custom of distributing exactly 50% of its surplus, its total surplus may have been US\$135,000, which is remarkable coming from one of the smaller Worldcons.

### London Bids for 2014 Worldcon

The London in 2014 Worldcon bid was officially announced at the British Eastercon. The committee proposes to hold the con August 14-18, 2014 in the new International Convention Centre, part of the ExCeL exhibition centre complex in London's Docklands.

Leading the bid are co-chairs Steve Cooper and Mike Scott. Steve ran the Publications division for the 2005 Glasgow Worldcon and is the deputy Facilities division head for 2011 Worldcon in Reno. Mike has extensive Worldcon experience and co-edits the

Hugo award-winning fanzine *Plokta*.

There are two Deputy Chairs. James Bacon, a former TAFF winner, who co-chaired the 2009 Eastercon. Alice Lawson was the Member Services division head at Interaction and chaired the 2001 Eastercon.

Other members of the bid are Claire Brialey, Secretary, co-editor of *Banana Wings*; John Dowd, Treasurer; Rita Medany, Membership, who is chairing the 2010 Eastercon; and two Advisers, past Worldcon chairs Vince Docherty and Colin Harris.

The bid will finance it activities by the sale of "pre-supporting" and "friend" memberships, costing £12 and £60 respectively that will receive discounts on membership in the convention itself.

### VCON 35 Is Steaming Your Way

"Steampunk - From Alchemy to Zeppelins" will be the theme of VCON 35, October 1-3, 2010. The con will be in the Vancouver, British Columbia area -- they're still picking a facility.

The Guests of Honour are Author Cherie Priest (*Boneshaker*), Artist James Beveridge (*On Spec Magazine*), Musician Heather Dale.

Memberships are C\$45 to July 1, C\$50 to September 1, C\$60 to October 1 (at the door).



# FANDOM'S TANGLED WEB

## Harlan Ellison Grammy Nominee

Harlan Ellison earned a 2010 Grammy nomination for his reading of *Through the Looking-Glass And What Alice Found There*.

Susan Ellison revealed the news December 2 on *Harlanellison.com* saying, "Harlan is running around yelling 'Oh, my God! Oh, my God!'" A reader pointed out that put him in a class with President Barack Obama, winner of a Spoken Word Grammy.

The reason for all this love is apparent from a review in *Audiophile Magazine*, "Ellison's jaunty reading provides just the right mix of whimsy and awe for the story's rhymes and clever characters."

The recording was nominated in the Best Spoken Word Album For Children category.

When the awards were announced January 31, Ellison lost to Buck Howdy and his *Aaaaah! Spooky, Scary Stories & Songs*.

Harlan reassured followers of his website, "I had a couple of my own favorites—neither of whom happened to be me, right from the git-go—but it has been a keen-o hoot of a ride, and you'll just have to take my sincere smiling word on this: I am copacetic with the way it turned out."

P.S. After I ran this story online I learned that Buck Howdy is the professional name of Steve Vaus, the brother of Wil Vaus who did a joint book signing with Diana in 2008. It's a small world after all....

## What Heinlein Believes

Edward R. Murrow did a series of audio essays called "This I Believe" on CBS for four years in the 1950s. Lately the *Bob Edwards Show* on the Sirius Satellite Network has been shining a spotlight on Murrow's old program, replaying one of the essays every week.

Murrow introduced the concept with the first installment in 1951: "This I Believe. By that name, we bring you a new series of radio broadcasts presenting the personal philosophies of thoughtful men and women in all walks of life. In this brief time each night, a banker or a butcher, a painter or a social worker, people of all kinds who need have nothing more in common than integrity—a real honesty—will talk out loud about the rules they live by, the things they have found to be the basic values in their lives."

Robert A. Heinlein contributed "Our Noble, Essential Decency" to the series and recorded his own words for broadcast. You

can hear Heinlein speak his piece at the *This-I-believe.com* website, which provides free and immediate access to a digital recording and a full transcript.

Heinlein's essay begins: "I am not going to talk about religious beliefs but about matters so obvious that it has gone out of style to mention them. I believe in my neighbors. I know their faults, and I know that their virtues far outweigh their faults."

The most interesting lines are these: "I believe that almost all politicians are honest. For every bribed alderman, there are hundreds of politicians—low paid or not paid at all—doing their level best without thanks or glory to make our system work. If this were not true, we would never have gotten past the Thirteen Colonies."

After reading so many of his characters define an honest politician as one who stays bought it is reassuring to hear him say so.

## Best Bad Guy Ever

Ed Green has made it easier than ever to follow his blooming acting career through his page on the Internet Movie Database.

That's the place I learned Ed played "The Bad Guy" in *Wife of the Bad Guy*, Steve Bartlett's 15-minute crime short.



There's a reason **Ed Green** knows where the bodies are buried.

The story concept is: "There's someone for everyone – even the bad guy. But how much does she really know about her husband's business?"

Bartlett's film has been accepted for showing at the Fear No Film Festival in Utah and the Delta International Film & Video Festival in Massachusetts.

In the meantime, keep looking for Ed in new features, commercials and music videos. Or else.

## Natcon 50 Commemoration

Fans are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the first Australian National Science Fiction Convention, held at Sydney in 1952. The Natcon 50 Project committee plans to publish a commemorative book and is actively seeking photos, stories, programs, scanned images, or links to such things already posted online. They've opened an impressive variety of technological portals to make it easy to send things to them:

"You can share your Natcon mementos with us in whatever way is most convenient. If you have a Flickr account, upload photos and scanned images (or find stuff you've already uploaded) then tag them with 'Natcon50' to add them to the pool. Or you can email us at [natcon50@gmail.com](mailto:natcon50@gmail.com), or contact us through our Facebook page. Keep up to date with how the project is going by following our RSS feed or follow Natcon50 on Twitter."

Ironically, there was one thing missing from the original announcement - an address for sending them dead tree fanac. I suspected some of the vintage fans who own the old, old material they need would relate more easily to making paper copies. When that was pointed out they promptly fixed up a paper mailing address too: Natcon 50, P.O. Box 3027, Yokine, WA, 6060 Australia



# Lasting Impressions: News from the World of Fanzines

## 2010 FAAn Award Winners

The Fanzine Activity Achievement Awards were presented at Corflu Cobalt in Winchester, England on March 21.

**Best Fanzine:** *Banana Wings* (Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer)

**Best Fan Writer:** Claire Brialey

**Best Fan Artist:** Steve Stiles

**Best Letterhack** (aka Harry Warner Memorial Award): Robert Lichtman

**Best Website:** eFanzines (Bill Burns)

**Lifetime Achievement Award:** Ted White

**Number One Fan Face:** Robert Lichtman

**Best New Fan:** Jacqueline Monahan of Las Vegas

Votes were cast by 43 fans this year. In the closest race, Best Artist, Steve Stiles edged Dan Steffan by a single point.

Celebrating a Corflu tradition, D West was chosen Past President of FWA for 2009.

The next Corflu will be hosted in Sunnyvale, California in February 2011. Chris Garcia and crew will hold it at the Domain Hotel.

## Occam's Starship

On February 16, Matthew Sanborn Smith ignited a controversy by advocating that people nominate *StarShipSofa* for the Best Fanzine Hugo: "Because of a rewording of the rules, The StarShipSofa podcast could be eligible for nomination for the Best Fanzine Hugo. Wait. Could be? The truth is, we can't know for sure until we get in somebody's face and force the issue by actually scoring nominations from lots and lots of people. You happen to be one of lots and lots of people."

The campaign, which proved successful, stirred up resistance in some familiar corners of fandom, partly because unlike most fan-

zines *StarShipSofa* presents fiction, making it comparable to last year's winner *Electric Velocipede*, and partly because *StarShipSofa* is done as an audio podcast, therefore (of course) is not in the form of text.

The idea also has its defenders. On Cheryl Morgan's site both sides got a thorough airing.

Their discussion interested me quite a bit. In one of the exchanges Chris Garcia commented, "But still, I can't think of any way in which a Podcast isn't a dramatic presentation or that a Podcast IS a fanzine." And Cheryl Morgan, defending the eligibility of a podcast magazine for Best Fanzine, tried to convince Chris to rethink his argument by challenging him with this extrapolation: "And what would [you] say if Tony used a speech-to-text converter to put transcripts of *Star Ship Sofa* episodes online as text? Would that suddenly make it a fanzine?" I was fascinated by the whole philosophy-of-fanzines debate.

But when I'd finished reading I wondered if something important had been overlooked. Matthew Sanborn Smith's fervently desired constitutional crisis can't possibly arise because Hugo Administrator Vincent Docherty won't be forced to decide if a podcast is eligible. Here's why.

People who nominated *StarShipSofa* simply wrote down "StarShipSofa" on their ballots. They did not write down "StarShipSofa — only the podcast, nothing else." The podcasts are posted at <http://www.starshipsofa.com/>, an extensive, regularly updated website — which seems unquestionably eligible for the Best Fanzine Hugo under the new rules. Even if Vincent Docherty had a problem with the eligibility of a podcast (no way of knowing) he has no reason to let the existence of the podcast

prevent him from attributing the nominating votes to the perfectly eligible same-named website. In the end, Docherty self-evidently found *StarShipSofa* was eligible under some rationale.

## Flaming Youth

Chris Garcia set his beard on fire while cooking on March 5. Fortunately he was uninjured apart from his beard needing to be trimmed.

Chris has been mourned his blighted sartorial splendor on Facebook. My favorite among the blizzard of comments made by Chris's Facebook friends was Kate Kligman's insightful question: "People like that your face caught on fire?"

## SF 101

When *Science Fiction/San Francisco* #100 came out in December the excitement of hitting the century mark was overshadowed by the startling announcement that co-editor Chris Garcia and copyeditor David Moyce had stepped down (although Chris planned to keep writing articles), leaving co-editor Jean Martin in full charge. At the same time, Jean announced she was ratcheting down the frequency from bi-weekly to monthly.

A sigh of relief greeted the arrival of *SF/SF* #101, because that showed the schedule change had not degraded into an indefinite hiatus, and also because Chris Garcia contributed a major story.

Chris was the first person with access to the participants to effectively report and analyze the BayCon committee's meltdown. A large number of committee members resigned out of concern over the parent corporation's tax status and dissatisfaction with the leadership of Michael Siladi.

Chris also has a piece about the "Anime Expo Implosion" and the management controversies that have ensued since it changed leadership.

Both are fine examples of fannish news-writing.

Jean Martin has taken the title of Editor-in-Chief but she won't have to fly solo. España Sheriff will become an Editor and contribute more in the future (though she's been writing fascinating conreports all along).

Rina Weisman from the original "SF in SF" online and Tachyon Publications also has volunteered to become the team's new proofreader. I'm very jealous. I wish *File 770* had a proofreader. (And I know you all wish it did, too!)





## Jay Lake Wins Dalmas Award

Jay Lake was presented the 2010 John W. Dalmas Award during opening ceremonies at RadCon in February.

"The award," announced the committee, "is [in] recognition of Jay Lake's gift of himself to not only RadCon, but fandom in general."

## Alice's Copy of Carroll Brings Top Dollar

The first edition, dedication copy of *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There*, presented to the original Alice by Lewis Carroll, fetched \$115,000 at a Profiles in History auction on December 16.

Another first edition of the book that came with two fine original pencil drawings by John Tenniel of Alice and Humpty Dumpty sold for \$46,000.

The auction was full of items science fiction and fantasy fans would love to own. Beatrix Potter's personal copy of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* went for \$92,000; *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, First Edition, first state of the text and first state of the plates, cost a bidder \$51,750; and *The Time Machine: An Invention*, first edition, presentation copy inscribed by the author, H.G. Wells, brought \$25,875.

Inklings fans would have needed deep pockets to take home *The Fellowship of the Ring*, first British edition in dust jacket: its new owner paid \$11,500. *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, with a tipped-in autograph letter about Narnia by C. S. Lewis, was a comparative bargain at \$9,200. Diana has wanted a Lewis autograph for years, but just before the auction we blew the family fortune on a used 2007 Camry.



## Will San Diego Lose Comic-Con?

Will San Diego Comic-Con International relocate to another city after 2012? The question inspired a sudden burst of TV and newspaper stories in February. Comic-Con's facilities commitments expire in 2012. But would the 126,000-person convention leave its birthplace and home for the past 40 years?

The San Diego *Union-Tribune* ran a story "Is Comic-Con Really Leaving San Diego?" on February 21. The next day the question was echoed by television stations in Southern California serving communities that would like to attract the con, like KTLA in Los Angeles.

Sometimes stories like this come in response to information released to leverage public opinion, which is evidently true in this case. The San Diego Convention Center Corporation has sent a proposal to Comic-Con that would extend their contract through 2015. At the same time, it's made a concerted effort to rally public support to keep the con in San Diego.

Comic-Con spokesman David Glanzer pointed out to the *Union-Tribune* that four-day passes to this year's convention sold out in September, and individual tickets for Friday and Saturday are already gone. Space is at a premium and the Comic-Con board is being courted by other convention agencies.

"We have to be aware of our attendees, and we don't want it to be problematic for them to attend the show," Glanzer said. "When you have to limit exhibit space and sell out early, those are negatives, but by San Diego trying to increase hotel-room blocks and utilize space at adjacent hotels, that may neutralize some of those things. It's not a secret that Anaheim would love for us to move up there, and they have a world-class facility and a lot of hotels and have put forward a great location, but it will be up to the board to decide exactly what it is we can do. We have to look at the pluses and minuses of everything. It's not just as easy as choosing a pin on a map and saying, 'Let's go here.'?"

Charles Ahlers, president of the Anaheim/Orange County Visitor & Convention Bureau, told a reporter, "Candidly, we think of Comic-Con as a good fit because we have a very nice, walkable housing package and a big convention center that is the largest in California. The emotion is with San Diego because it grew up there and is at risk of leaving, but nothing lasts forever."

Comic-Con is expected to make its decision the spring.



## Phil Dick's Dream Library

Philip K. Dick had a series of dreams about needing to find an unidentified book. *Letters of Note* posted a copy of the correspondence where Dick explains that the sought after book is not Heinlein's *I Will Fear No Evil*:

"The first dream on July 4 was much more explicit than any before; I took down my copy of Robert Heinlein's *I Will Fear No Evil*, a large blue hardback U.K. edition, for two men to look at. Both men said this was not a book (or the book) they were interested in. However, it was clear that the book wanted was large and blue and hardback."

Did his dream self eventually figure out which book they wanted? Yes. It was an unreadable 700-page biography of President Warren G. Harding.

## A NaNoWriMo Winner

Joy V. Smith, a frequent contributor to *File 770's* letter column, is one of the NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month) 2009 winners. The goal of NaNoWriMo is to write 50,000 words in 30 days. Writers start November 1 and must finish by November 30. She finished on November 25 by writing over 2,000 words a day. Joy has written an article on her experience for an upcoming issue of *Working Writer*.

## Conventional Reportage

### *Reno Experiments with YA Membership Rate*

Worldcon runners are always thinking of ways to make the event attractive to the upcoming generation of science fiction fans. A lot of creative publicity telling them about guests and programming gets released as the con approaches. However, even if something catches their attention, it's difficult to overcome their resistance to high membership prices. This is especially true of young adults who are students or hold entry-level jobs and have limited resources.

Just as the Worldcon is about to happen, and newcomers are likely to hear about it for the first time, is also when the highest membership rates kick in. Student rates or discounts have been debated for years. The challenge has been to create a policy that benefits a significant number of fans without antagonizing the others who still have to buy regular memberships at the graduated rates (providing a big chunk of money needed to run the convention.)

Renovation, next year's Worldcon, will be the first to experiment with Young Adult (YA) memberships. Available to anyone aged 17 to 21 as of August 17, 2011 (the first day of the convention), these memberships will have the same voting privileges and

right to receive publications as full attending memberships. YA memberships cost \$100.

The Reno committee has wisely anticipated some of the issues that come with creating a new class of membership. The website announces that individuals who have already purchased Full Attending memberships, but are eligible for the reduced YA rate, can obtain a refund of their overpayment by contacting Renovation. And they are restricting transfers of YA memberships to people who also meet the YA age criteria.

On May 1 Renovation's full adult attending membership rate will increase from \$140 to \$160.

Discounts for pre-supporters of the Reno in 2011 bid will expire on that date, too.

Remaining unchanged are the attending membership rates for children (0-16 years old) and the \$100 rate for young adults (17-21) discussed above. This is part of the con's initiative to encourage families and children to come to the con.

### *San Jose to Host Smofcon*

The next Smofcon will be held in San Jose over the December 3-5, 2010 weekend. The theme of next year's Smofcon is "Building Bridges." San Francisco Science Fiction Conventions, Inc. (SFSFC) is the host or-

ganization. Glenn Glazer and Craig Howlett will chair. Tom Whitmore will coordinate the program. The con will be held at the Sainte Claire Hotel.

SMOFcon is an annual conference for conrunners, especially those who work Worldcons. Black bow tie required.

### *Mythcon 41 Sets Dates*

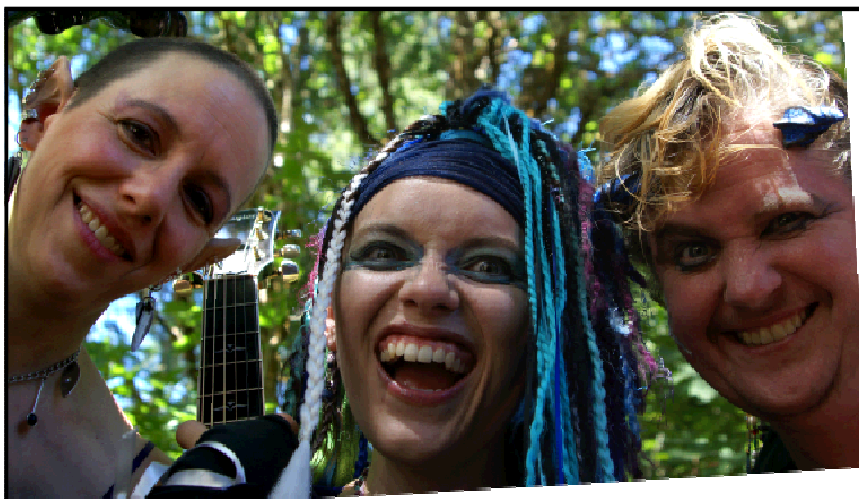
Author Tim Powers and scholar Janet Croft are two compelling reasons to attend Mythcon 41 in Dallas.

Tim Powers is famous for his stories revealing the supernatural causes of history. *Three Days to Never* (2006) is the most recent of his four Mythopoeic Fantasy Award-nominated novels, while *Last Call* (1992) and *Declare* (2000) won the World Fantasy Award.

Janet Croft is the editor of *Mythlore*, one of the premier periodicals on the Inklings and fantasy literature. Her three books about J.R.R. Tolkien include *War in the Works of Tolkien* (2005), winner of the Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies.

The conference will run July 9-12, 2010 on the Southern Methodist University campus in Dallas.

## *Tricky Pixie Announced Special Guest of Reno 2011*



The musical group Tricky Pixie has been selected by the Renovation committee as a special guest of the 2011 Worldcon.

A popular group in the Pacific Northwest since it started performing in 2007, its members are S. J. Tucker, Alexander James Adams and Betsy Tinney, "animated entertainers, capable of taking the lis-

tener on a musical journey ranging from Celtic rock, to haunting and bluesy a cappella numbers, to sweetly sung circus lullabies and even to roaring tribal folk songs."

Their current album is *Mythcreants*. You can listen to one of the cuts at the 2011 Worldcon website.

I was very pleased to read that Renovation, the 2011 World Science Fiction Convention will be offering a discount to young persons aged between 18-21. They have also taken an initiative with Family memberships, something I had not even thought about, and again something that is quite laudable.

I noted quite a few people commenting that this was not a bad thing, but as a person who is keen to find ways to grow memberships at Worldcons, I thought I should pen some thoughts on the matter to explain why I think this is a thing to be applauded. I also hope people will consider other ways to help and garner new and younger members.

**Trust.** Con Coms are trusted with OPM (other people's money) I trust them to make these decisions. Renovation are brave to go with the idea, but I don't expect this will lead to a dereliction of other duties, in actual fact, I trust that they understand that this gives them other important responsibilities. I need to trust them and I do.

**Priority.** Con Coms may have many types of discounts, initiatives and expenditures that they choose to do, to prioritise. LX last years National Convention in the UK gave free memberships to Eastercon attendees before 1965. Unwaged and students and young people got discounts at LX. Reno has prioritised Youth and Families, that is the priority they have chosen, and although I would like discounts for people under 25 and the unwaged it's not my call and there is only so much any con can do. It's a lot better than nought.

**Sustainability.** We need young people to sustain the Worldcon machine. Patrick Nielsen Hayden wrote online, "I think this is a good idea, but I do find it disquieting to contemplate that, if this policy had been in effect at the one Worldcon where I was a department head, I would have been eligible to buy a 'YA membership,' and I wouldn't have been the only con member in that position, either."

Not going after young people is reckless strategically. A discount is a start towards attracting young people. Other things will have to happen, but anything to bring in young people now, helps build the future of the event.



**Tim Powers**, a Renovation (2011) Worldcon Guest of Honor, at Loscon.

**It's a long game.** I welcome Reno's move, but it's only a start, a bloody amazing start, very brave and bold, but even so, we need to continue, to monitor and track and build it into budgeting and be prepared to repeat this. If we don't attract new blood now, where Worldcons will be in 10 -15 years because of such discounts becomes slightly academic.

**Other tactics welcomed.** This is just one angle, one idea, one concept, not a solution, not a panacea, so we need to THINK and be inventive and consider how we all will do our bit to get young people involved. It may not work, but that should not mean we do not try. We can be doing so many other things too - if we come up with them.

**Ticket first.** People do not book flights,

and then hotels and then buy a membership. The first hurdle is the membership. If a person cannot afford it, the rest is irrelevant. Discounting may make that first hurdle surmountable.

**On the cheap.** Worldcon can be done on the cheap. We need to let folks know about local cheaper hostel accom, the food in the con suite and the booze at the parties. It needs to be recognized by people who can afford to go to Worldcon after Worldcon that not everyone has that ability. Con Com's too, we need to remember. Just communicating relevant aspects that we take for granted might help. I slept on a floor so I could go to a Worldcon, as I couldn't afford the room. That was in 2008. People can find solutions to their other problems, or not, but WE can fix the high cost of a membership and let em know about the great things going on.

**Book readers.** We need to focus on our core, BOOK READERS through the Library, College, Bookshop, Comic Shop Game Shop - book consumers. We need to get Free Book websites to link to us. Games and Comics shops and those media are slowly but surely encroaching into the book field. Movies have been doing it for decades. Should WSFS have adverts - generic ones - in the back of SF Books. How can we get publishers to help us, and how can we let more book readers know this social extravaganza of science fiction and fantasy exists?

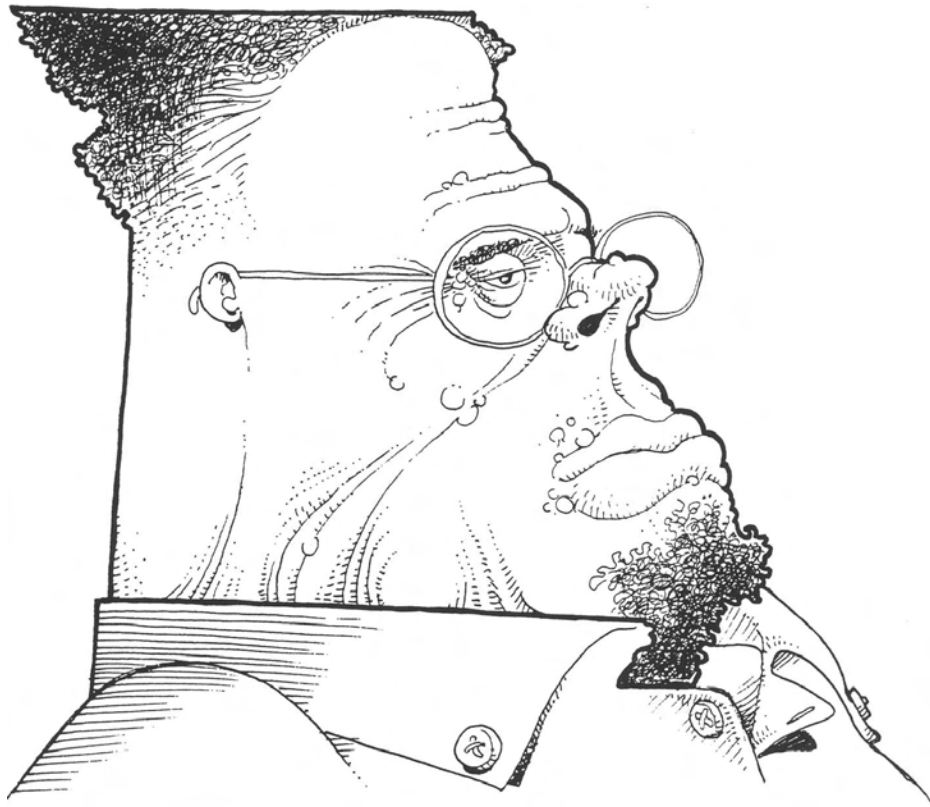
**Young people can add value.** There is nothing like the enthusiasm and dynamism of youth, young people have ideas, and thoughts and these can be a brilliant contribution to many aspects of the con, they create a buzz, and are fun and sometimes can be motivators. My 'opinion' is that people enjoy seeing young people enjoying cons. Anything the makes people enjoy cons adds value.

**It's an investment.** If, as many do already, they volunteer, or gopher, or get involved, become enthused, see what's going on, and even think they could have a go, that is an investment.

**Altruism not Subsidy.** So much time and effort is devoted to con running. Attendees and conrunners seem to want more young

# Reno: Discounting Youth

Thoughts by James Bacon



**MORRIS MOSELY**  
from **MISSOURI**

people, therefore doing things like a financial discount is not a specific subsidy, rather an extension of the overall altruistic endeavour that is at the heart of our hobby. Being welcoming is life blood.

Worldcon is subsidised in a way. Everything is paid for by members. Concoms choose what to do, sometimes rightly, sometimes wrongly, this is just another choice, and in the scheme of things, not a big one. As an area head who once had \$10K cut from under him, and had to seek funding elsewhere, I am aware all con coms make hard decisions. This one should be easy.

**Budget for it Dummy.** We are clever people, Worldcons are pretty damn neat things, really, so we just need to figure this into our long lists of finances and ensure that it all works out.

First or tenth it should be amazing. Worldcons need to be welcoming, if we are not a good first con, then are we doing everything we should be. Should we say - do not come if this is your first con - on advertising - of course not. Someone's first Worldcon experience should be as amazing as possible, regardless. Many probably are, we just don't know either way cause we don't really have the data.

**Local is good too.** If only local people avail of such a discount, that is not a problem. My first con was local too. I went on to do things, locally, nationally and internationally.

A percentage of nothing, is still nothing. We have no real idea how many young people go to Worldcon. Although we may 'lose' money if the number of people in the discounted age group remained the same, the hope is that the growth in the age group will more than allay that cost. It is not squandering money, we can all point to something at many Worldcons, which made errors or mistakes that burnt cash, but this is not one of them. The positive message, PR and angle, that goes out alone has a value. Reno is being talked about, already it's beneficial.

**Resolved.** Oops, there was a resolution passed, by democratic means at the last WSFS business meeting that suggested "the business meeting recommends that future WSFS conventions sell discounted memberships to younger persons." Although this is not binding, and may not have been germane to the reasons behind the Reno Con Com decision, it is nice to see that Reno has at least looked at this recommendation and considered it. To disregard it, out of hand,

would be disappointing, especially when thinking is free.

**A start.** There is a myth that once a Worldcon does something, every following one, will need to. This is not so. Each Worldcon is its own sovereign entity, and that needs to be remembered and respected. I expect that I will continue to suggest to whomever runs 2013 and 2012 that they consider doing something like Reno, or maybe a bit more, or maybe differently, to their own liking, but I will still push on.

But Good Readers, what else should we be doing, what initiatives can we take to get more young folks involved, and interested?

### Paul Krugman's Anticipation

*The New Yorker's* profile on economist Paul Krugman had this to say about his appearance at the 2009 Worldcon:

"Last August, Krugman decided that before he and Wells departed for a bicycle tour of Scotland he would take a couple of days to speak at the sixty-seventh world science-fiction convention, to be held in Montreal. (Krugman has been a science-fiction fan since he was a boy.) At the convention, there was a lot of extremely long hair, a lot of blue hair, and a lot of capes. There was a woman dressed as a cat, there was a woman with a green brain attached to her head with wire, there was a person in a green face mask, there was a young woman spinning wool. There was a Jedi and a Storm Trooper. Those participants who were not dressed as cats were wearing T-shirts with something written on them: 'I don't understand—and I'm a rocket scientist,' 'I see dead pixels,' 'Math is delicious.' Krugman has always had a nerdy obsession with puns....

"Krugman explained that he'd become an economist because of science fiction.... 'If you read other genres of fiction, you can learn about the way people are and the way society is,' Krugman said to the audience, 'but you don't get very much thinking about why are things the way they are, or what might make them different. What would happen if?'"

### **Superman Comic Breaks Record**

A copy of the 1938 edition of *Action Comics* No. 1 sold in March for \$1.5 million on the auction Web site ComicConnect.com. The highly sought-after issue that features Superman's debut originally sold for 10 cents.

When I was a boy and *Action Comics* No. 1 was selling for only a little more than the cost of my parents' house I couldn't afford it. Now that it's worth \$1.5 million I still can't afford it. Why do they even call this news?

## Takumi Shibano

Takumi Shibano died January 16 at the age of 82. The reported cause of death was pneumonia.

His life spanned the founding of Japanese fandom to the announcement of the Nippon 2017 bid. He was a guest of honor at two Worldcons, L.A.con III and Nippon 2007.

Japanese author Tetsu Yano, who Gene Van Troyer called Japan's Robert Heinlein, said he could hardly imagine what would have become of SF in Japan if Takumi Shibano had not existed: "Thanks to his fanzine *Uchuujin*, we had a network that allowed us to meet, and I feel blessed that Shibano-san was here to create it. All of Japanese science fiction and fandom was born as a result."

Takumi, born in 1927, was the son of a Japanese Army officer. Following his father's postings, Takumi attended schools in Taiwan, Tokyo and Manchuria. Upon finishing high school in 1945 he was drafted into the Physico-Chemical Research Association. There he learned the essentials of modern physics. After the end of WWII, Takumi attended the Tokyo Institute of Technology, graduating in 1950.

That same year he sold his first story, which appeared under the name "Kozumi Rei" (a wordplay on "cosmic ray"). He would later use that pen name as a novelist and translator of science fiction stories.

Takumi taught math for 26 years at Tokyo Municipal Koyamadai high school, from 1951 until 1977 when chronic asthma led him to quit teaching and become a full-time writer and translator. Among the works he translated into Japanese are Clarke's short story "The Sentinel" and Larry Niven's *Ringworld* and "Inconstant Moon."

A colleague, veteran translator Hisashi Asakura, paid this compliment to his work in 1996: "Takumi Shibano has such a fundamental grasp of science that he understands the nature of the ideas that the writers have. If he has the slightest question about anything, he pursues the answer with total dedication, writing letters of talking directly with the authors. He's peerless — a real role model for translators and authors."

Takumi and Sachiko Takahashi married in 1954. They had two daughters, Miho and Minae.

Takumi's fascination with SF first drew him to join the UFOs Flying in Japan's Skies Research Group in 1956. As he explained in a quote run in the Nippon 2007 Souvenir Book, "It wasn't that I was so enamored of UFO research, but that I was interested in those basic, fantastical science ideas, so I wanted to do SF." The group was as close as he could get, but that would soon change.

At one of the meetings he threw out the idea of doing an extra issue of the group's publication solely devoted to SF. Several



Rick Sneary, Roy Tackett, **Takumi Shibano** and Sachiko Shibano at BayCon in 1968. Photo by Len Moffatt.

members responded so enthusiastically they launched the first issue of *Uchuujin* ("space dust") in May 1957. *Uchuujin's* first issues were handwritten on mimeograph stencils, but had become a typeset publication by 1960. In later years, the zine's best stories would be collected in five professionally published volumes.

Production of the magazine soon led to in-person discussion and the formation of *Kagaku Sosaku* (variously translated as Science Fiction Club or Science Creation Club), led by Tetsu Yano.

Takumi chaired four of the first six Japanese national science fiction conventions. He also helped establish the Federation of SF Fangroups of Japan in 1965 and served as chairman from 1966 until 1970.

He wrote several original juvenile science fiction novels, all published in Japan under his pen name Rei Kozumi: *Superhuman 'Plus X'* (1969), *Operation Moonjet* (1969), and *Revolt in North Pole City* (1977). He was also the principal author of *The World of Popular Literature* (1978), a nonfiction work.



## OBITUARIES

Takumi was effectively introduced to American fans through the pages of Roy Tackett's fanzine *Dynatron*. People became eager to meet him in person. LA's bid committee for the 1968 Worldcon simultaneously ran a fan fund to bring Takumi Shibano to the Worldcon. Only the fan fund succeeded, consequently Shibano-san attended BayCon, the Worldcon in Berkeley, California.

He and Sachiko attended many more Worldcons through the years. At Denvention 2 in 1981 they appeared on stage during the Hugo Awards for the first time to present Seiun Awards to the Western sf writers whose translated works had won. (The winners are chosen by the Japanese national convention.) It became a Hugo night tradition for the Shibanos or other Japanese pros to appear in ceremonial robes and recognize the winners.

Takumi won World SF's President's Award in 1984 and its Karel Award in 1991. He received a Special Committee Award from ConFrancisco, the 1993 Worldcon. And he won the E. E. Evans Big Heart Award in 1987.

Takumi, through his love of science fiction, achieved a rare bridging of cultures. He was a gracious man who warmly responded to anyone's welcome or questions. Like Ackerman, to whom he is invariably compared, he was one of fandom's early organizers who became an international ambassador of science fiction.

## Roy Test

LASFS co-founder Roy Test died December 20 of complications from a fall. He was 88.

As a teenager Test helped start the Los Angeles chapter of the Science Fiction League in 1934. Interviewed in 2007 about the club's first meeting Roy recalled, "I had been corresponding with people through the SF magazines, and it was surprising to be in the same room with them. There were only eight or 10 of us, but that was more science fiction readers than we'd ever seen in one place." The club was renamed the Los Ange-



Founding LASFS member **Roy Test** won a Bronze Star as a B-17 pilot in WWII.

les Science Fantasy Society when it left the SFL a few years later.

Speaking at the club's 75th anniversary banquet last October, Roy described meetings at Clifton's Cafeteria when he was 13 or 14 years old, and how his mother, Wanda Test, volunteered to be club secretary as a way to come "and see what kind of oddballs I was associating with. Maybe it didn't occur to her I was the oddest one there." (They called her minutes "Thrilling Wanda Stories.")

Roy joined the Army in WWII and became a pilot. He flew 32 missions over Europe in a B-17 Flying Fortress known as "The Bad Penny." He earned two Bronze stars, the Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross.

In recent years Roy actively participated in the Commemorative Air Force, spoke publicly about his WWII experiences, and volunteered as a docent at the Planes of Fames Air Museum in Chino.

### Ken Porter

The death of LASFS member Ken Porter was announced in December 2009 by John Hertz. According to Ken's sister, he had missed a couple of appointments. A check of his apartment led to the discovery that he had died some time ago. The cause of death was not immediately known.

People all remember Ken as friendly and easygoing, which he was, though I also remember he had a passion to help the club, and no patience whenever an injustice was done to his friends.

Like many LASFSians, Ken appeared in Niven, Pournelle and Flynn's novel *Fallen Angels* – described on page 387 as a "heavy-set black man." In years gone by he participated on "Why Is Fandom So White?" panels run at several LA area conventions.

### Phil Castora

Phil Castora, who joined LASFS in 1962, died during the summer of 2009. This was not learned until November when Charles Lee Jackson II went to his care facility intending to drop off some back copies of APA-L. Phil was a past secretary of the LASFS, and a truly funny writer. I loved his letters of comment to *File 770* – they were gems.

Phil found a lot to laugh about and he was legendary for suddenly feeling something was so funny that he would laugh uncontrollably and collapse onto the floor. Bruce Pelz described this to several of us when I was a new club member,

and answered that I hoped to see it. "No you don't," contradicted Bruce, who had already seen it quite often.

Back in the 1970s Phil made his living for awhile as a process server, which gave him an inexhaustible source of stories about the strange and ridiculous. His personal favorite was about the lawyer who had a lot of trouble properly filling out the necessary form to respond to lawsuit for malfeasance.

### Rob Holdstock

Rob Holdstock, 61, died November 29 after two weeks in hospital with a massive *e coli* infection, Malcolm Edwards reported on the Trufen list.

Holdstock was a widely-admired writer of mythopoeic fantasy. He was a 4-time winner of the British Science Fiction Award. As *January Magazine* summarized the highlights of his literary career, "Holdstock was first published when he was just 20. The short story, "Pauper's Plot," was published by *New Worlds* magazine. His first novel, *Eye Among the Blind*, was published in 1976. Though he created a large and critically acclaimed body of work throughout his career, he is best known for the Mythago Wood cycle of novels. The first book in the series, *Mythago Wood*, won the World Fantasy Award for Best Novel in 1985. The most recent book in the Mythago Wood Cycle, *Avilion*, was published in July of this year."

Holdstock will also be remembered as a popular contributor to the top British fanzines of the 1970s.

### Jim Harmon

Well-known fan Jim Harmon died February 16. I had the good luck to meet him for the first time at the 2009 Loscon. Unfortunately, on the last day of the con he suffered a mild heart attack and was briefly hospitalized and

now, less than three months later, he has passed away.

Harmon was one of the many fans who also enjoyed professional success in sf, writing more than 50 stories for the prozines. Later he gained a strong following in another fandom, the followers of "old time radio." His friend Martin Grams recalls:

In 1967, he published *The Great Radio Heroes* which to this day, is considered a milestone for reference books about old-time radio. Prior to that book, there was nothing really published that truly documented old-time radio through interviews and newspaper articles. Not only was he the first to do any sort of real research, but his smooth prose offered his generation a chance to revisit feelings of nostalgia.

In the mid-Seventies Harmon was West Coast editor of *Monsters of the Movies*, Marvel's version of *Famous Monsters of Film-land*. In 1977 he was presented the Inkpot Award by the San Diego Comic-Con.

For better or worse, Harmon's early fanfame revolved around the "Midwestcon Door Incident." As Harry Warner wrote in *A Wealth of Fable*:

Around 8 p.m. on May 27, 1954, Harlan Ellison was engaging in the ancient fannish pastime of tossing water encased in paper bags from a window when Jim Harmon happened by the impact point of one missile on the sidewalk. Several fans went immediately to the room where Ellison locked himself. Informed that Harlan was not receiving visitors, Harmon "hit the door about four times with my fist and it splintered and fell down," as Jim remembered the event later. Ellison, undiscouraged, simply locked himself in another room with an intact door until police arrived.

Later, so Buck Coulson told *Mimosa* readers:

The police left and that evening Harlan came around to various room parties, apologizing for the affair and taking up a collection to pay for the broken door. A bit later, Harmon came around, 'disguised' in Lynn Hickman's coat (which was about half the size he usually wore), apologizing for the incident... and taking up a collection to pay for the broken door. Our group tossed quarters to each one.

It's a funny part of fanhistory, but Harmon outgrew it years ago. We can count on Harmon's memory remaining alive in several different fandoms for years to come.

### Midge Reitan

Chicago area fan Midge Reitan died January 14. I'll miss her: we talked at a lot of Worldcons and Windycons over the years.

Back in the day, whenever I ran into Midge she was usually with Martha Beck or Dana Siegel. It was through Midge and Dana that I met and became friends with Martha (who had already made her legendary run for TAFF before I ever met her.)

Midge made an appreciative audience for Dana Siegel: they had the same acerbic wit (although Dana's is more so.)

Midge helped friends throw parties and contributed to conventions in other ways, rarely getting her name on any long lists with the exception of her service as co-chair of Windycon 7 (1980).

### Annette Carrico

Kentucky fan Annette Carrico passed away overnight on December 24.

Joel Zakem wrote online, "Though confined to a wheelchair, Annette ran the con suite at Concave for as long as I can remember (even at the Park Mammoth which had no elevators and where the con suite was on the second floor), helped in the con suite at other cons, and she was scheduled to be the Guest of Honor at Concave 31 in February 2010. She was also Fan GOH at Rivercon 23. Annette was an avid reader and one of the nicest people you could meet. She will be missed."

Gary Robe's 1997 article *History of Concave* emphasizes, "Annette's contribution cannot be understated. Since the success of a relaxacon revolves around the quality of the consuite, Annette's tireless shopping, hauling, and food preparation has been central to the Concave's deserved reputation as having one of the greatest consuites in all convention fandom."

### Michael Moslow

Michael Moslow, a fan from New York City, died January 7 from pneumonia. He was 57.

According to Dennis McCunney, Moslow had a relapse after recovering from a stay in intensive care late last year. Until a few weeks before Moslow's death he "was still wearing a trache, but was mobile and in good spirits." Moslow was on the verge of retiring from the Post Office and moving upstate with his wife, Naomi.

### William Tenn

William Tenn (Phil Klass) died February 7 at the age of 89 from congestive heart failure, closing a celebrated life. Tenn was one of Noreascon 4's Guests of Honor in 2004 (for the occasion producing a collection of nonfiction and personal essays, *Dancing Naked*). He also was a SFWA Author Emeritus (1999).

His first story, "Alexander the Bait," was



Robert McCall's mural at NASA Langley Research Center.

published in *Astounding* (May 1946). Fans saw through the "William Tenn" pen name, but convinced themselves this was not the work of a newcomer — at the 1947 Philadelphia Worldcon Phil Klass gave a monolog based on alleged mail from fans who thought "Tenn" was one of Henry Kuttner's innumerable pen names.

He is survived by his wife, Fruma Klass, and their daughter Adina. Fruma married Phil in March 1957, a year after they met. She wrote about their courtship:

When Phil told me, with some trepidation, that he wrote science fiction, I was delighted. I read science fiction. I read everything, including the backs of cereal boxes, though most of the time I couldn't remember writers' names. But I did know the name "William Tenn." I had loved the only story I could remember under that byline, and I told him so. "I loved your story 'In Hiding,'" I told him.

There was a silence. Then he said morosely, "I didn't write that. That was Wilmar H. Shiras." "Oh," I said. There was another silence. It wasn't a really good way to start off on a relationship.

I found that a striking coincidence for the very embarrassing reason that I encountered her admission while seeking the title of the selfsame story, which I remembered reading in Terry Carr's collection *Science Fiction for People Who Hate Science Fiction* and was convinced was my favorite William Tenn story.

Going with Plan B, my favorite Tenn story is "On Venus, Have We Got a Rabbi," from Jack Dann's collection *Wandering Stars: An Anthology of Jewish Fantasy and Science Fiction* (1974).

William Tenn wrote science fiction while Phil Klass taught English and comparative literature at Penn State University for 24 years. And the man with two names made a lasting mark in both his professions.

### Dan O'Bannon

Famed sf movie maker Dan O'Bannon, 63,

died December 17 from complications of Crohn's Disease which he had battled for 30 years.

He is best known for writing *Alien*, winner of the 1980 Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo. The *Guardian's* tribute to O'Bannon commented insightfully, "Over the years, many connected with the film have greedily and not entirely accurately claimed credit for just about everything good about *Alien*. But if you search out the original script on the internet, you'll see most of it was already there courtesy of O'Bannon."

Other science fiction films he co-authored include *Lifeforce* and *Total Recall*.

He also directed several movies. Bill Warren considers the best of these to be *The Return of the Living Dead*, a comedy sequel to the original film that opens with a title card revealing that everything you're about to see is absolutely true and all the real names are used.

O'Bannon's career began with the low-budget 1974 sf film *Dark Star*. It originated as a USC student project co-written with director John Carpenter. The movie was not a commercial success, but it developed a cult following among sf fans and inspired the name of the student sf club at UC San Diego.

### Eric Woolfson

Eric Woolfson, composer for The Alan Parsons Project, died of cancer on December 2 at the age of 64. His many works included several sf/f-oriented albums — "Tales of Mystery and Imagination" (1976) based on Poe's writing and "I, Robot" (1977) based on Asimov's. Other works include "Eye in the Sky," "Pyramid," "La Sagrada Familia" and more.

### Kippy Poyser

By Andrew Porter: Kennedy "Kippy" Poyser, 64, former husband of Hugo winning SF artist Victoria Poyser, died of a heart attack in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico on November 30. When the couple were living in Olympia, Washington, Poyser taught at Evergreen State College and worked extensively on Norwescon, especially its program book. He was Fan GoH at the 1981 Orycon, organized

and ran Hatcon in Danbury, Connecticut in the 1980s, designed and edited the 1982 World Fantasy Convention program book, and owned bookstores in Connecticut, where he published and sold SF-related posters, and later in Texas, where he also owned bookstores and taught college. At the time of his death he was planning to open a bookstore in Mexico. He is survived by his former wife and his children artist Astra Poyser Laughlin and filmmaker Bryan Poyser.

### *In Passing*

David Weber's mother-in-law **Bobbie Irene Wilson Rice** died November 27. His e-mail announcement assured everyone that his wife (Bobbie's daughter) Sharon Rice-Weber, and the Weber family are doing fine "but they all still miss Bobbie."

**Roy Edward Disney**, who led two separate revolts against chief executives of his late uncle's corporation, and helped revive its legendary animation unit, died December 16 of cancer. He was 79.

The first chief executive of the Walt Disney Co. that Roy unseated was Walt's own son-in-law, Ron Miller. The second was Michael Eisner.

Space artist **Robert McCall** died February 26 of a heart attack in Scottsdale. He was 90.

An appreciation posted by the National Space Society (where McCall served on the Board of Governors) recalled numerous examples of his iconic artwork: "One can see the influence Robert McCall had by going to the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum, where his vast mural depicting man's conquest of the Moon covers an entire wall on the Museum's main floor, as well as in old movie posters for 2001: A Space Odyssey, and in a two-decade-long series of postage stamps depicting space themes."

**Roger Gaillard**, curator of the Maison d'Ailleurs from 1989 to 1996, and the editor of several books, died of cardiac arrest on January 22. The Maison d'Ailleurs (translated as "House of Elsewhere"), is a museum of science fiction, utopia and extraordinary journeys in Yverdon-les-Bains, Switzerland.

California actor and producer **John McGarr**, 45, attending the Horrorhound convention in Indianapolis, was walking to breakfast when a car swerved out of the traffic lane and killed him. The Indianapolis *Star* reports the driver was taken into custody on preliminary charges of driving while intoxicated causing death.

McGarr was the executive producer of *House of the Wolf Man*.

Literary agent **Don Congdon** died on November 30 at the age of 91.

The *New York Times* said, "Mr. Congdon, who started out as a messenger at a small New York agency, developed an enviable reputation as a skilled editor, tough negotiator and shrewd judge of talent. While still a young editor at Simon & Schuster, he tuned in to the early stories of Ray Bradbury, who became one of his first clients after he set up as a full-time literary agent in 1947."

The news made Andrew Porter realize, "Lived here in Brooklyn Heights, but I never met him, sigh..."

Australian children's author **Patricia Wrightson** died March 15 of natural causes at the age of 88.

She wove Aboriginal mythology into her writing, for which she has been both praised and criticized. She was awarded the biennial Hans Christian Andersen Medal in 1986 for her body of work. Others have characterized her stories as an exploitation and misappropriation of Aboriginal culture.

In an Associated Press story, publisher Mark Macleod said, "She was trying to create a kind of pan Australia - a whole new Australian mythology which was part non-indigenous and part indigenous."



# *Appreciation of Mark Owings*

## *by Martin Morse Wooster*

Mark Owings, who died of pancreatic cancer in Baltimore on December 30, 2009, a week before his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday, was one of fandom's noblemen. I knew him for nearly 30 years, and never saw him get angry or even raise his voice. He was one of the nicest and most honorable persons I ever knew.

If you had a conversation about Owings, it usually would be about books. It would last a long time; his favorite words were, "Oh, by the way..." and off we would go on another topic. He may not have read everything, but he had read more sf than anyone else I knew. As someone commented in a newspaper, Owings was



**Jul and Mark Owings** enjoying Balticon 37 in 2003.

the sort of fan who not only had read the legendary (but rare) stinker *Werewolf vs. the Vampire Woman*, but also could talk about it intelligently.

His rowhouse in Baltimore's funky Hampden section was, as his phone message said, "a house surrounded by books." Owings's principal hobby was collecting used books and reselling them, either at conventions or through his mail order service, Luna City Books. He was also active in donating books to the Baltimore BookThing, a nonprofit that recycles books; he also regularly donated books to the Hampden Family Center and other local community organizations. He was particularly proud





Mark Owings at Balticon 42 in 2008.

of rescuing sf books discarded by the Baltimore public libraries and making sure they ended up in the hands of readers that wanted them and would care for them.

Politically Owings was a conservative, who prided himself on being one of the few Republicans in his urban Baltimore congressional district. But his fundamental decency and kindness ensured that he had many friends who were liberals.

Mark Owings was born in Baltimore in January 1945. His first fannish activity came in 1962, when, as a student at Baltimore City College (which, then and now, is an elite public high school), he met Jack Chalker, a year older. Chalker, in a history of Baltimore fandom written for *Mimosa*, recalled hearing about a student who “knew more about science fiction than anybody else he’d ever seen but had the sort of mind that was like a library card catalog.”

Chalker and Owings hit it off and became best friends. They were a balanced pair—Chalker loud, brash, and opinionated, Owings quiet, reserved, and secure. Owings was Jack Chalker’s best man at his wedding to Eva Whitley in 1978. They remained close until Chalker’s death in 2005.

In 1962, Chalker, Owings, and David Ettlin, coming home from a Washington Science Fiction Association meeting on a Greyhound bus, decided that Baltimore needed a sf club of its own. The three of them co-founded the Baltimore Science Fiction Society (BSFS). Although Owings was an active member of WSFA, BSFS was his home. Owings was chair of Balticons 5, 6, 7 and 26

and was fan GoH at least once. (He was also Fan GoH at a 1980s Hexacon.) Owings was most active in running the Compton Crook Award for the best first novel, and energetically read hundreds of first novels over the decades in order to determine which ones were the best.

Much of Owings’s writings were as a bibliographer. His “Electric Bibliograph” column graced the pages of Jack Chalker’s *Mirage* and Don Miller’s *WSFA Journal*. In the 1970s he published about 15 bibliographies of sf writers, sometimes in collaboration with Jack Chalker or Janet Kagan. Of these, the most important was *The Revised H.P. Lovecraft Bibliography* (with Jack Chalker, 1973), which is in over 175 public and university libraries, including Harvard’s. Owings also compiled bibliographies for *Fantasy and Science Fiction* for special issues devoted to James Blish (1972) and Frederik Pohl (1973).

Frederik Pohl (1973).

One of Owings’s more unusual bibliographies came about in the early 1970s. According to Richard Harter, who wrote a detailed account in 2006, New York book dealer Irving Binkin, who mostly dealt with estates, ended up buying the collection of a man named Grill, who died without heirs. “Grill was the complete Lovecraft collector,” Harter writes. “He had multiple copies in mint condition of every edition of every book Lovecraft had ever written...He had copies of mimeographed fanzines that Chalker had never seen and didn’t know existed. He had it all. Chalker remarked that Grill would have collected Lovecraft and his coffin if he could have.” Binkin eventually sold the collection, but not until he and Mark Owings had cataloged it as *The Grill/Binkin Collection*, published by Mirage Press in 1975.

Owings’s one substantial book came about as a result of Jack Chalker’s decision to return to fan publishing in the late 1980s. Chalker and Owings decided to revise—and massively expand—an annotated guide to small press books they first published in 1966. The third edition of *The Science-Fantasy Publishers*, published by Mirage Press in 1991, is a massive—and highly entertaining—reference book that will remain a permanent contribution to scholarship. Chalker and Owings collaborated on four published supplements to the book and a couple of more, which only appeared on CD-ROMs. *The Science-Fantasy Publishers* earned Owings his only Hugo nomination, in 1992; he lost to a Charles Addams art book.

Owings lived in New York City for a few years, working as a caseworker for the New York City Department of Social Services. When he moved to Baltimore, he went to work for the U.S. Treasury Department as a computer programmer, retiring in 2002.

His last major bibliographic work was on the Fictionmags Index, an ongoing project to index all fiction that ever appeared in magazines. Owings’s specialty was the *Saturday Evening Post*, and he loved spending days in the Enoch Pratt Free Library, copying table of contents pages and re-reading much of the fiction in the magazines he indexed.

Owings married Julanne Brandes Ochs in 1983. Their happy marriage lasted until Owings’s death.

Owings’s funeral service was held at St. Luke’s Lutheran Church in Baltimore (a few blocks from his house) on January 8. BSFS has set up a Mark Owings Memorial Fund to honor Owings’s memory.



## 2010 Hugo Nominations Announced by Aussiecon 4

Here are the 2010 Hugo Award nominees, revealed by the administrator during the British Eastercon on April 4. .

### BEST NOVEL (699 nominating ballots)

*Boneshaker* by Cherie Priest (Tor)  
*The City & The City* by China Miéville (Del Rey; Macmillan UK)  
*Julian Comstock: A Story of 22nd-Century America* by Robert Charles Wilson (Tor)  
*Palimpsest* by Catherynne M. Valente (Bantam Spectra)  
*Wake* by Robert J. Sawyer (Ace; Penguin; Gollancz; Analog)  
*The Windup Girl* by Paolo Bacigalupi (Night Shade)

### BEST NOVELLA (375 nominating ballots)

“Act One” by Nancy Kress (*Asimov’s 3/09*)  
 The God Engines by John Scalzi (Subterranean)  
 “Palimpsest” by Charles Stross (Wireless)  
 Shambbling Towards Hiroshima by James Morrow (Tachyon)  
 “Vishnu at the Cat Circus” by Ian McDonald (*Cyberabad Days*)  
 The Women of Nell Gwynne’s by Kage Baker (Subterranean)

### BEST NOVELETTE (402 nominating ballots)

“Eros, Philia, Agape” by Rachel Swirsky (Tor.com 3/09)  
 “The Island” by Peter Watts (*The New Space Opera 2*)  
 “It Takes Two” by Nicola Griffith (*Eclipse Three*)  
 “One of Our Bastards is Missing” by Paul Cornell (*The Solaris Book of New Science Fiction: Volume Three*)  
 “Overtime” by Charles Stross (Tor.com 12/09)  
 “Sinner, Baker, Fabulist, Priest; Red Mask, Black Mask, Gentleman, Beast” by Eugie Foster (*Interzone 2/09*)

### BEST SHORT STORY (432 nominating ballots)

“The Bride of Frankenstein” by Mike Resnick (*Asimov’s 12/09*)  
 “Bridesicle” by Will McIntosh (*Asimov’s 1/09*)  
 “The Moment” by Lawrence M. Schoen (*Footprints*)  
 “Non-Zero Probabilities” by N.K. Jemisin (*Clarkesworld 9/09*)  
 “Spar” by Kij Johnson (*Clarkesworld 10/09*)

### BEST RELATED WORK

(259 nominating ballots)

*Canary Fever: Reviews* by John Clute (Becon)  
*Hope-In-The-Mist: The Extraordinary Career and Mysterious Life of Hope Mirrlees* by Michael Swanwick (Temporary Culture)  
*The Inter-Galactic Playground: A Critical Study of Children’s and Teens’ Science Fiction* by Farah Mendlesohn (McFarland)  
*On Joanna Russ* edited by Farah Mendlesohn (Wesleyan)  
*The Secret Feminist Cabal: A Cultural History of SF Feminisms* by Helen Merrick (Aqueduct)  
*This is Me, Jack Vance! (Or, More Properly, This is “I”)* by Jack Vance (Subterranean)

### BEST GRAPHIC STORY

(221 nominating ballots)

*Batman: Whatever Happened to the Caped Crusader?* Written by Neil Gaiman; Pencilled by Andy Kubert; Inked by Scott Williams (DC Comics)  
*Captain Britain And M113. Volume 3: Vampire State* Written by Paul Cornell; Pencilled by Leonard Kirk with Mike Collins, Adrian Alphona and Ardian Syaf (Marvel Comics)  
*Fables Vol 12: The Dark Ages* Written by Bill Willingham; Pencilled by Mark Buckingham; Art by Peter Gross & Andrew Pepoy, Michael Allred, David Hahn; Colour by Lee Loughridge & Laura Allred; Letters by Todd Klein (Vertigo Comics)  
*Girl Genius, Volume 9: Agatha Heterodyne and the Heirs of the Storm* Written by Kaja and Phil Foglio; Art by Phil Foglio; Colours by Cheyenne Wright (Airship Entertainment)  
*Schlock Mercenary: The Longshoreman of the Apocalypse* Written and Illustrated by Howard Tayler

### BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION

- LONG FORM (541 nominating ballots)

*Avatar* Screenplay and Directed by James Cameron (Twentieth Century Fox)  
*District 9* Screenplay by Neill Blomkamp & Terri Tatchell; Directed by Neill Blomkamp (TriStar Pictures)  
*Moon* Screenplay by Nathan Parker; Story by Duncan Jones; Directed by Duncan Jones (Liberty Films)  
*Star Trek* Screenplay by Robert Orci & Alex Kurtzman; Directed by J.J. Abrams (Paramount)  
*Up* Screenplay by Bob Peterson & Pete Docter; Story by Bob Peterson, Pete Docter, & Thomas McCarthy; Directed by Bob Peterson & Pete Docter (Disney/Pixar)

### BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION

- SHORT FORM (282 nominating ballots)

*Doctor Who: “The Next Doctor”* Written by Russell T Davies; Directed by Andy Goddard (BBC Wales)  
*Doctor Who: “Planet of the Dead”* Written by Russell T Davies & Gareth Roberts; Directed by James Strong (BBC Wales)  
*Doctor Who: “The Waters of Mars”* Written by Russell T Davies & Phil Ford; Directed by Graeme Harper (BBC Wales)  
*Dollhouse: “Epitaph 1”* Story by Joss Whedon; Written by Maurissa Tancharoen & Jed Whedon; Directed by David Solomon (Mutant Enemy)  
*FlashForward: “No More Good Days”* Written by Brannon Braga & David S. Goyer; Directed by David S. Goyer; based on the novel by Robert J. Sawyer (ABC)

### BEST EDITOR, LONG FORM

(289 nominating ballots)

Lou Anders  
 Ginjer Buchanan  
 Liz Gorinsky

Patrick Nielsen Hayden  
 Juliet Ulman

### BEST EDITOR, SHORT FORM

(419 nominating ballots)

Ellen Datlow  
 Stanley Schmidt  
 Jonathan Strahan  
 Gordon Van Gelder  
 Sheila Williams

### BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST

(327 nominating ballots)

Bob Eggleton  
 Stephan Martiniere  
 John Picacio  
 Daniel Dos Santos  
 Shaun Tan

### BEST SEMIPROZINE (377 nominating ballots)

*Ansible* edited by David Langford  
*Clarkesworld* edited by Neil Clarke, Sean Wallace, & Cheryl Morgan  
*Interzone* edited by Andy Cox  
*Locus* edited by Charles N. Brown, Kirsten Gong-Wong, & Liza Groen Trombi  
*Weird Tales* edited by Ann VanderMeer & Stephen H. Segal

### BEST FAN WRITER (319 nominating ballots)

Claire Briailey  
 Christopher J Garcia  
 James Nicoll  
 Lloyd Penney  
 Frederik Pohl

### BEST FANZINE (298 nominating ballots)

*Argentus* edited by Steven H Silver  
*Banana Wings* edited by Claire Briailey and Mark Plummer  
*CHALLENGER* edited by Guy H. Lillian III  
*Drink Tank* edited by Christopher J Garcia, with guest editor James Bacon  
*File 770* edited by Mike Glycer  
*StarShipSofa* edited by Tony C. Smith

### BEST FAN ARTIST (199 nominating ballots)

Brad W. Foster  
 Dave Howell  
 Sue Mason  
 Steve Stiles  
 Taral Wayne

### THE JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD FOR

BEST NEW WRITER (356 nominating ballots)

(Not a Hugo Award. This is an award for best new Science Fiction writer of the past two years, sponsored by Dell Magazines and administered by the current Worldcon committee.)

Saladin Ahmed  
 Gail Carriger  
 Felix Gilman \*

Seanan McGuire

Lezli Robyn \*

\* Second year of eligibility

# FAN NOIR

## Scene 6—The Fanwriter's Fanwriter By Taral Wayne

A lot of nonsense has been written about fanwriting. I see no reason I shouldn't add to the already daunting accumulation.

There are the basics, of course. Grammar, vocabulary, rhythm, richness of expression, metaphor, anecdote, a grasp of human experience, and the capacity to extract from a good lie a greater truth that the reader might benefit by. It ain't easy. Worse, the writer never has any clear idea how far short he falls of these basics until he has bettered himself. Only then can the writer look back on his early blunders, and appreciate in fullness just how much of an ass he had made of himself.

This has been my privilege of late, in an ongoing effort to rediscover and rescue old fanwriting of mine. As I've been writing a great many new things of late, my interest grew in old pieces that appeared in fanzines of the 70's and 80's. Some of those, I remembered, weren't half bad. On re-reading them, it might have been more accurate to say they were only half good.

Finding old articles in past issues of *Scientifrication* and *File 770*, *Groggy*, and *Sticky Quarters* was only half the problem. Typing them into Word Doc presented difficulties with almost every sentence. Do I replace words with better ones, rewrite whole phrases, add new images, or insert entire sentences where wanted? At what point do I find myself writing a completely new article? Or should I faithfully reproduce whatever I find on the mimeographed page? While it might be true to the archivist's ideal, I found simply too many examples of inexcusably bad writing to be satisfied with verbatim copying. I noticed as well, many lost opportunities to make a point or a pun. And all too often, whatever I was trying to say was so murky that not even I was sure what I meant. The trick lay in achieving the right balance of preserving the past and presenting it in a palatable form.

It has been instructive. I'll say no more than that.

The exercise has made me more mindful of fanwriting, as such. What is it beyond the basics of any kind of writing that makes fine fanwriting?

I have no doubt about what many fans would point their fingers at. Bear with me while I invent a number of stereotypes, and for pity's sake don't make guesses about who I mean. These are cartoons, not real fans.

To M. Michael Sergeant, editor of *String Theory Quartet*, good fanwriting would likely mean anything that advances the religion of science fiction. The question asked by Sergeant is whether given writing promotes the genre. Does it help bring a favourite writer the

recognition he deserves from the public? Does it bring science fiction greater respectability with academia? In such fanzines there is a sense that SF is a great historical movement, one that will leave its footprints in the sands of time in the same way Greek Tragedy and Elizabethan Theater have. I'm not saying it *won't*, but it's no matter of faith to me that it *will*, either. I have no personal sense of mission to record each insignificant development among science fiction authors, nor to evaluate every last word published. Now and then an important work is produced that sheds hitherto unrealized light on some aspect of the science fiction genre that we must be grateful for. But it's rare. Sercon writing is not for me a rich mine of satisfying fan writing.

The other extreme might be that of Hans Fritz, whose take on fan writing sometimes seems like an exercise in navel gazing. Fandom is defined on an almost regular basis in the pages of *Quabal* as the social ties among a fairly tight-knit group of people who share a common hobby activity, and a mutual history stretching back over decades. One joins this group by educating oneself in the minutiae of what Bob Tucker said, and how Red Boggs got to Midwestcon, and one adds to the collective memory with some inanity such as trying to order vegetarian sushi at the Corflu banquet. There's very much to be said for this approach. It eliminates at a stroke the millions of people who are like fans but that we don't know, and have little reason to. It's major disadvantage is that cliquishness doesn't itself confer merit. One can be very fannish, but quite dull. Nor do we all know the same people, even in our tightly curved space-time.

David and Alex Irish and their fanzine *Control-Alt-Delete* take a different approach to fannish writing. Here we have a day by day journal of the lives of typical fans. We know these writers, and are presumed to be interested in everything that happens to them. They're willing to tell us too, holding back very little. Are they not sleeping well because of overtime at work, and an upcoming downsizing? Do they have to avoid legumes in their diet because of prescription drugs for back pain? Are Thursday nights with the local fans at the Spotted Dick growing stale? Will the next issue be late because of a leaking roof that needs fixing? Fandom has a need to know every detail of such pressing matters, and the Irishes attempt to fill it. The idea that anything a fan does is interesting to read about grew from a sensible germ, no doubt. Yet I'm inclined toward an observation about writing... indeed about all art... that I came across somewhere years ago. Most of the trick isn't in what you put in, but in knowing what to leave out.

At the extreme were zines such as *Phosphor*, by Guy Gymbel. Personalzine writing of the 70's broke more than one or two barriers, and gave any number of people sympathetic readers to spill their guts to. Who can tell, but perhaps because of touchy-feely perszines,



somewhere there is a fan who was able to expose their innermost feelings, and put off that deliberate drug overdose indefinitely. But speaking for myself, those kind of zines at their most revealing tended to give me the creeps.

Then too, there's fan politics. There are several approaches. The most commonly taken is that of Kent Bowling-Green's *Circular File*. The facts are laid out in a logical progression, both sides weighed, and (should one be warranted) a conclusion is presented at the end. The method is not without merit, but depends in large degree on how much interest the reader brings to the subject. The approach fails, however, whenever you don't give a rat's ass about what was said in the opening ceremonies of Somecon or Otherclave. The reader naturally tends to browse the newsy sort of fanwriting, looking for a subject that catches his attention. Depending on how into the fan scene he is, this could be most of the issue, or very next to nothing. Whether you pique the reader's attention is hit or miss. "Ben Yallow Buys New Bow-Tie for WSFS Business Meetings." That's a must-read for some people. "Meteor Impact Destroys City During Philcon." I haven't been to one of those in years and might easily give the item a miss.

There is more passion if perhaps fewer statistics in the fan politics found in any of Dan Blanc's old fanzines (*Tang, Planetary, Vacuum, Tactic, Blah*). Discussion centers on personalities, mainly. Who's bidding for the Worldcon? Should they? Why not? Who deserves a Hugo? What should be done about TAFF? Who do I think should be GoH? Few of these questions would go unanswered either. This style of writing has more entertainment value than factual reportage. The chief danger is that you might get caught up in it. In the hands of a

skillful scrivener, it's easy to imagine that the ultimate fate of LASFS funds, or how ballots are counted at Corflu is of vital importance, and forget that in reality they matter little compared to discovering a first edition you've always wanted, or a dinner date with someone special who doesn't mind Thai. Friendships have ended over less than has been said in fanzines *in friendship*, let alone as politics. Fan politics should certainly be enjoyed, but keep in mind that this sort of writing is the art of finding the Perfect Wave in a demitasse.

There is a passive-aggressive form of fan writing, as well. Spencer Garp's laments in *The Journal of Misapplied Sciences* are one very good example. In this style of writing, fandom Isn't As It's Meant to Be or at least Not Like it Used to Be. Once this has been said, the author then enumerates the many ways in which fandom falls short of his ideal. Next follows a master plan to set things right. The appeal to the good old days is one I respond to. I fondly remember being twenty-two, and arguing all night in donut stops about vital issues such as whether New Wave was really SF or not, and whether it will bring the millennium. In retrospect it all seemed like wrestling a killer whale in an inflatable wading pool. Nevertheless, I loved the sense of urgency and importance that those discussions had. But that was then, for one thing, and I really don't want to go back there. For another, if you can't find what you're looking for in one place, the sensible thing is to look somewhere else. You can't make a page of Hyphen from a ream of slipsheets from Boowatt.

Finally we come to the lowest common denominator of fan writing – the pointless natterer. I won't attempt to personify him with a cartoon. No one who suspected the shoe fits is likely to see the humour in it. It might even be beyond him to see the humour in anything bearing on his freedom of expression. Alas, too, there are just too many of them.

The nattering fanwriter ordinarily repeats whatever news he's come across. When he has exhausted this meager store, he recounts details of recent events in which he happened to be present. He reminds us of minor roles as spear carrier he has been entrusted with. In the worst cases, if you can be sure of finding nothing else you will find ample name-dropping. It makes the writer more fannish by proxy. However, two things are almost always found missing in natter. They are any hint of an original idea, and anything like an interesting opinion. It goes without saying that the writer is devoid of style, and generally radiates an absence of charisma that would take the new car smell out of a Porsche driven right out of the showroom.

I've used a lot of words to describe what *isn't* ideal fanwriting, the sort that a Richard Bergeron *doesn't* spend a small fortune on to collect in a leather bound edition. What, then, do I want when I pick up a fanzine and start flipping through the pages?

To begin with, one has to have a sense of style. This implies a personal point of view, a way of saying things characteristic to ourselves. It shouldn't be possible to put someone else's name on an article without anyone noticing the switch. Style requires a writer to know how to choose an appropriate voice. Even while it's vital that a writer be himself, not all subjects can be treated the same. Tongue-in-cheek is totally different from wistfulness, nor is overstatement the same as matter-of-fact. Good writing demands mastery of *how* a thing is written, and the writer must be able to adapt to the needs of his subject. Style, too, is a matter of fresh expression. It won't do to have a perfect command of commonplace clichés that have ceased to bring up vivid associations. A face that stops a clock is a only a clumsy way to say "ugly". No one imagines anymore a clock that actually stops from shock. A face that capsized a thousand ships, however, makes the reader pause and think a moment. He should actually picture in his mind the sheer blinking ugliness of an anti-Helen, and a thousand

ships capsizing at once. Anyone can simply *say* something. There is really little new than anyone *can* say. The trick in writing is mostly about how you say it.

It's always been my belief that before you begin to write, you ought to have something worth writing about. Most things are not worth writing about, to be blunt about it. My breakfast deserves no-one's notice, nor does my sore back, the unusually bad weather this winter, the rising price of corned beef and diet cola, nor the last book I read. This isn't to say there is a cosmic list of interesting subjects and another one of dull subjects, and that all things belong to one or the other. Far from it. What makes my sore back or the price of corned beef interesting is *a point*. By a point I don't merely mean that corned beef is becoming expensive, either. That would be tediously obvious whether expressed in ten words or a thousand. What I mean has little to do with the corned beef at all, and everything to do with literary devices. Irony. Suspense. Mood. Surprise. Resolution. Without them there is little writing worth reading.

In many ways, writing is a stage trick. To tell a person baldly that you found a dime is not much of a story. The trick is to make him think finding a dime has changed the entire course of your life, or that it was such an outrageously unexpected development that it beggared belief, or that no one had ever found a dime in such unusual circumstances before, and likely never would again. Everyone knows a magician produces cards from up his sleeve, but if he is clever, the audience is astonished anyway! That's a writer's job too, with words rather than cards.

In addition, it's hard to place too great a value on originality. I know that I've made much of the idea that the trick of writing isn't in what you say, but how you say it, nevertheless most readers welcome a change of pace. In fact, originality is very much a matter of how you say a thing. Repeat out loud the word "blue" over and over. In time it ceases to register on the mind as a colour, and becomes a senseless noise like "brfl". Now change "brfl" to "azure", "sapphire", or "cerulean" and it's a colour again. To keep a reader's interest the writer must vary not only his vocabulary, which is a small matter, but also in the manner in which you present an idea. For instance, let's suppose you want to write a con report. Have you written them before? Have they always started with arriving at the hotel, on the first day, and proceeded toward the last day in the order in which things happened? Try something different. Start with the first really memorable thing that happened at the con instead. Or begin with your goodbyes on Sunday, and write the con backwards as a series of flashbacks. To be sure, there's no such thing as a genuinely original idea. But the writer isn't in competition to out-do Terence or Shakespeare. You are the proper measure of your writing. Do *your* best to be fresh and surprising.

So far I've talked about bad writing, and then good writing. What specifically is good *fanwriting*? This is certainly the hardest question to answer. While good fanwriting must be good writing to begin with, it isn't enough to say that any good writing is fan writing. Joan Didion isn't a fanwriter, nor is George Orwell, though both wrote fascinating articles and essays.

Much of what passes for fanwriting does so because it resembles the sort of writing I began with by lampooning. In short, the types of writing found in most fanzines falls into the small number of loose categories:

- Writing about science fiction, or related subjects.
- Writing about fandom.
- Writing about fan politics.

Writing about individual fans.

Writing about yourself.

But does merely writing in one of these categories make it necessarily fanwriting?

Quite a lot of people would argue that the first category is not only legitimate fanwriting, but the original source of all fanwriting, and they're probably right. At the same time, so many of us point to it and call this "unfannish" that there is clearly something lacking in sercon writing. Something is missing, and fails to set sercon writing apart from reviews in *Analog*, or collections of essays such as "In Search of Wonder," "The Issue at Hand," or more recently "Engines of the Night". Unquestionably, sercon writing is an integral part of fandom. It can even be written in a casual style. But I'm forced to the conclusion that there's no necessity to call it fannish.

It's hard to escape any conclusion other than that writing about fandom is certainly fannish. Clubs, cons, awards and all that are the woof and weave of fandom. But not the life. Writing about the materials fandom is made from, though inevitable, is just a minor consequence of there being fandom at all. Although many fans have made clubs and cons a lifestyle, clearly these things were invented for some other purpose than just to serve themselves. They exist as conveniences for meeting people, for discussion, for buying and selling, for seeing new things, and for joining in social events. It's easy to see why so many fans regard this *as* fandom, yet it has an incidental character similar to the Cannes Film Festival, or the Academy of Motion Picture Awards. Is an Oscar what going to the movies is all about? I'll concede that writing about fandom must be conceded as a sort of fannish writing, but in my experience it only rarely achieves distinction.

With fan politics we come closer to the nitty-gritty. Although fan politics are as much a spin-off of fandom as con reports, club meetings, and award ceremonies, at least when we come to evaluating the politics of fandom, a critical faculty is involved. The reader's teeth encounter a little resistance as they sink into opinions and ideas. This is a distinct improvement over the simple list of events that usually makes up a con report. Admittedly, it's easy for fan politicking to go for cheap effects – rubbishing easy targets, for example. But with greater thought behind the writing, the opportunities for actual good writing grow. It's clearly possible to do better, though.

One of the highest expressions of fanwriting, in my opinion, is that which vividly portrays another fan, or group of fans. It isn't enough to recount a list of dry facts in such writing. The choice of incident, the recreation of a dialog, the insights into motive, the small observations of another person's habits all call for supreme skill in a writer if the piece is to come alive. Done well, the study of the fannish menagerie is not only entertaining but enlightening. We probably gain more understanding of fandom from a portrait of a Bob Shaw or early Futurians than we would ever get from a recital of what zines they published, or what years they belonged to FAPA. Of course, as in any other writing, there should be a point to the exercise. Not all things fans do are interesting. Not all fans are interesting. The writer's job is to winnow through the chaff and find the needle. If he is sharp-eyed, there is his point.

Writing about yourself is not really too different. Too many fans writing about themselves ramble. They tell you their daily routine and how they feel that moment as they sit at the keyboard. They let you know what they've been reading, who they've seen, where they've been, and their plans for next week. But that's not fanwriting, that's Facebook. You should look at yourself as another person, someone

who has done something of genuine interest, and waste no time on saying whatever comes into your mind. When writing about yourself, you should be handled no different from any other subject. Determine your point, chose the best way to drive it home, and devil take the rest. It is rarely done right, in my opinion. But when it is, very little fannish writing can top it!

But are the criteria that make the best fanwriting the same as those that make any other writing superior? Pretty much, I suspect. I see no way that fanwriting can be judged any other way. What magic in the word “fannish” could make below-average fanwriting into anything but what it is?

If good fanwriting is neither more nor less than plain good writing, we’re led to an interesting question. Is there any such thing as good fanwriting? When we speak of it, are we only using a different name for the same thing – like calling a gem a jewel? Most of us would certainly not deny good writing is good writing, but who would go so far as to say that an essay by Tom Wolfe or George Orwell published in *Banana Wings* is fannish? Or that an item by Bob Lichtman or Claire Briailey belongs in *Harpers*? There is some difference, I’m sure

of it.

Here it is. Context. Whether or not we write about science fiction or fandom, there’s a common heritage to fan writing that other good writing cannot have. It isn’t much, really, but it is ours. When I make an off-hand reference to a “slanshack”, or “where no man has gone before”, it’s something we all recognize and appreciate. I don’t have to spell out what happened, when, where, or justify its place in our group awareness -- It is simply part of our common experience and outlook. We all read the same sub-texts. That’s about all there is about good writing that makes it fannish.

Unfortunately, before anyone will produce good fanwriting, they must first learn to write. Nothing will ever make that easy. Not reading “All Our Yesterdays” from cover to cover eight times. Not memorizing everything in “The Fancyclopedia”. Not even being voted Best Fanwriter at Corflu will shorten by one failed pun or one mangled metaphor the long, difficult apprenticeship of learning to be a superb fanwriter. Reading as much as you can by your betters may help. But only by consciously writing, writing, writing will you have any hope of setting a high standard for others to aim for.

## David Levine, First Science Fiction Writer on Mars

David Levine was selected by the Mars Society for a two-week mission at the Mars Desert Research Station in the Utah desert

From January 9-23 the Hugo-winning author served with Crew 88 as a crewman Journalist together with Commander Stephen

F. Wheeler, Ph.D., Executive Officer/Engineer Laksen Sirimanne, Health & Safety Officer Bianca Nowak, Astronomer Paul McCall, and Biologist Diego Urbina.

His daily updates to Twitter and Facebook reached nearly 2000 readers. He took over 700 photos and 25 video clips to use in future outreach and publicity opportunities.

In one of his first posts after arriving in Utah Levine admitted that simply finding the MDRS was a challenge:

"We did get slightly lost in that last stretch — we were following a vague and extremely sketchy map drawn on the back of a cash register receipt by the clerk at the Hollow Mountain — but we were only half an hour behind schedule when the white cylinder of the hab, familiar to all of us from photographs even though we’d never been here before, peeked out from behind a rust-colored rock formation."

Getting to sleep in a strange place wasn’t easy either. "The hab is full of strange noises at night — whirs and thumps and gurgles — making sleep difficult, but eventually I put in earplugs and got a pretty solid night’s rest..."

Once the simulation began Levine contributed a lot to solving the mission’s technological problems, working on power



packs and getting webcams back online. Some things were simpler to fix than others: "Poking around at the computer there, I stumbled into a deeply-buried settings screen where all the contrast, brightness, and gamma controls were seriously messed up. A simple press on the Restore Defaults button brought the camera back to life. Go me!"

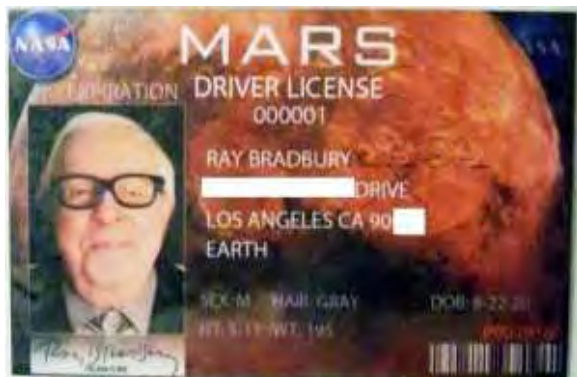
Some others in Crew 88 had a sense of humor, too. Executive Officer/Engineer Laksen Sirimanne decided to laugh instead of cry about the food:

*0800: Breakfast of instant oatmeal did not work out well. It ended up very sticky and I tossed it away although I should have used it to insulate the water pipes under the Hab.*

*1400: Lunch was Raman instant noodles and tea. I had two packets which had enough Sodium to Terraform most of Mars.*

Being outside in a spacesuit sounded like it was David's favorite activity, although it was also one of the most physically demanding: "The helmet makes it hard to see, the backpack makes it hard to balance, and all in all it's painstaking, tedious, hard work -- stoop labor on Mars. ...I can really see why





bunch, but so naive in the ways of Mars."

At home David found audiences wanted to hear about real science being done on simulated Mars missions. His lively five-minute presentation to 600 people at Ignite Portland is on YouTube. And the popularity of his 30-minute talk at Potlatch was affirmed at the auction when his MDRS mission patch and "Mars" rock sold for \$120.

Now that David's simulated Mars mission is over I bet he can't wait for the real thing. And when he goes, we have a driver all lined up for him. Last July, Ray Bradbury was at JPL for an event and they let him drive the Mars Rover. In honor of this he was issued the first Martian drivers license.

the astronauts in *The Right Stuff* despised the scientists so much."

During the second week of the mission a snowstorm interrupted the illusion of being on Mars. Then a couple days of rising temperatures turned everything outdoors to mud, making it tricky to drive the rovers: "We were slipping and sliding all over the place and the rovers' wheels were kicking up great quantities of brown and red goo; climbing hills turned into a real trial. I got stuck at one point, and Bianca had to take over my rover to get it out, but then I remembered the first lesson of driving in snow -- Don't Stop, Don't Slow Down -- and from then on I was fine."

They spent the last full day in the hab cleaning it for the next crew. David humorously observed, "Yesterday those were valuable geological samples, but today they're just rocks. When Diego asked what he should do with his unneeded samples, I said 'Throw 'em out the airlock!' I have never before had the opportunity to say that for real."

A three hour meeting completed the hand-over to Crew 89 on January 23. As a veteran of two weeks in the temperamental hab, David thought: "They seem like a smart

### Levine Wins Endeavour Award

Portland writer David D. Levine won the eleventh annual Endeavour Award for his collection of short stories, "Space Magic," published by Oregon publisher Wheatland Press. The Award is accompanied by an honorarium of \$1,000.00 and an engraved glass plaque. Levine's book is the first collection of stories to win the Award.

The winner was announced November 27 at OryCon. The other finalists were "Anathem" by Seattle, WA, writer Neal Stephenson; "Ill Met in the Arena" by Dave Duncan, who lives in Victoria, BC; "Long Walks, Last Flights and Other Stories" by Ranier, OR, writer Ken Scholes, and "A World Too Near" by Kay Kenyon, of Wenatchee, WA.

The Endeavour Award honors a distinguished science fiction or fantasy book, either



a novel or a single-author collection, created by a writer living in the Pacific Northwest. 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 2009 Award were Joe Haldeman, John Helfers, and Sarah Zettel. Pyr Books editor Lou Anders presented the Award.



**Above right:** Endeavour Award Winner David D. Levine. **Below left:** Finalist Ken Scholes with presenter Lou Anders. **Below right:** Finalists Kay Kenyon and Dave Duncan with Endeavour Award committee member Page Fuller.





WWW.NRFSF.COM



## Introduction to *New Realms of Fantasy and Science Fiction* (*Xin Huan Jie*), a Chinese SF/F Fanzine by The Editors of *NRFSF*

### 1. Brief history of Chinese SF fanzines

China's Science Fiction had a short boom period during 1978 through 1983, when there were no less than four professional SF magazines on the market. Due to the suddenly changed political environment, only one, that is the well-known *Science Fiction World* (SFW) published in Sichuan Province, struggled to survive and became extremely successful since late 1990. As far as fanzines are concerned, to many fans' surprise, it was actually not during that boom period when the first fanzine appeared. In 1987, when China SF was at its bottom, the first known SF fanzine *Nebula* was created by a worker in a state-owned forestry in Heilongjiang Province. His name is Yao Haijun, who currently is the editor-in-chief of *SFW*, still the No.1 SF magazine worldwide in terms of circulation.

For about 8 years, *Nebula* has been the only fanzine in China and become the virtual linkage among Chinese SF writers, professionals, critics and readers. It was brought to the Worldcon a few times to demonstrate to the west that we do have quality SF fanzine in China. When Yao put it an end to it in 1999, it had prouced more than 30 issues over 12 years.

Roughly since the mid-1990, China SF has witnessed its second boom evidenced by the launch of a new SF professional magazine and the skyrocketing popularity of *SFW*. SF fandom was growing fast as well. A number of paper-based fanzines were created and circulated to fans all over the country. Some reached the peak circulation of around 2,000. But none of them kept alive for more than three years due to various reasons. After the millennium, fans found a more convenient place for communication – Internet. Therefore it is not a surprise that web-based fanzines started to emerge. And to date, in fact nearly all the existing fanzines are webzines, either in flash or PDF format. Some worth-mentioning ones include the first SF webzine (*Sky and Fire*), the only fanzine dedicated to SF studies and critics (*Edge*), and the newsletter-style ezine (*SF News*). Unfortunately, none of these fanzines lasted longer than a year. Perhaps the most important reason is that the number of members in the publishing team has been so small that when the key persons lose their enthusiasm and passion, the fanzine becomes unsustainable.

### 2. New Realms of Fantasy and Science Fiction

*New Realms of Fantasy and Science Fiction*

(*NRFSF*) is a monthly SF/F fanzine. It was created in April 2009 by a group of SF/F fans. In the beginning, other fans were skeptical about how long this new fanzine could last. Ten months later, *NRFSF* not only is alive, but also is growing into the most recognized fanzine in the SF/F community.

The mission of *NRFSF* is simple: to provide fans with good science fiction and fantasy stories as well as non-fictions which are not available in these mainstream SF/F magazines. *NRFSF*, released in PDF format every month, features short stories, translated stories, reviews, interviews, essays, writer columns, and so on. Some unique features of *NRFSF* that stand out among its 10 previous issues:

First, *NRFSF*, by its title, is a magazine with a mixture of science fiction and fantasy. We believe in good speculative fictions.

Second, the stories in *NRFSF* tend to be adult-oriented in comparison with these professional SF magazines. One reason is that these professional SF magazines are aimed at children and young adult readers as they comprise the largest proportion of market. Another fact is an ezine is less influenced by keyword filters and censorship than print magazines or even blogs and discussion fo-



rums. It gives us more freedom to publish some stories which otherwise may not go through the censorship.

Third, new writers are being cultivated here. As a matter of fact, *NRFSF* has a department solely for debut writers. We want to give new writers more opportunities to showcase their works and take off from here.

Fourth, non-fiction is an essential part of the fanzine. Non-fiction is normally regarded as just a sidekick in professional magazines. Here we take it very seriously. Every issue of *NRFSF* has news articles, essays, interviews, or reviews. For instance, a monthly review of Chinese SF/F short stories on print magazines is actually inspired by the monthly review by Lois Tilton in *Internet Review of Science Fiction*.

Fifth, in addition to ezine, *NRFSF* planned a print anthology of SF/F novelettes and called for submission in August 2009. It turned out that the submissions were beyond our expectations in terms of quantity and quality. If everything goes well, the print anthology will be published in the coming summer.

Thanks to the strong and productive teamwork of our lovely *NRFSF* team members, for ten months, *NRFSF* has published many quality stories by aspiring and established authors as well as a large number of informative and inspiring non-fictions. It has been well received by SF/F fans and professionals all over the country. The scale of readership is growing fast. The number of downloads on the official website is no less than 5,000 per issue, with a peak number more than 10,000. One story was picked by the editors of the year's best SF anthology. Another one by Han Song, one of the greatest contemporary SF writers in China, is now on the preliminary ballot of the Sky Award, a Hugo-like Chinese SF/F award mostly organized by fans.

If you would like to know more about *NRFSF*, please email [xinhuanjie-blog@gmail.com](mailto:xinhuanjie-blog@gmail.com).



## 2010 Prix Aurora Nominees

Nominees for Canada's Prix Aurora Awards have been announced. The winners will be revealed at KeyCon 27/Convention 30 during the May 21-24 weekend.

### BEST NOVEL IN ENGLISH

*The Amulet of Amon-Ra*, by Leslie Carmichael, CBAY Books

*Druids*, by Barbara Galler-Smith and Josh Langston, Edge Science Fiction and Fantasy

*Wake*, Robert J. Sawyer, Penguin Canada

*Steel Whispers*, Hayden Trenholm, Bundoran Press

*Terra Insegura*, Edward Willett, DAW Books

### MEILLEUR ROMAN EN FRANÇAIS (Best Novel In French)

Le protocole Reston. Mathieu Fortin, (Coups de tête)

L'axe de Koudriss. Michèle Laframboise, Médiaspaul

Suprématie. Laurent McAllister, (Bragelonne)

Un tour en Arkadie. Francine Pelletier, Alire

Filles de lune 3. Le talisman de Maxandre. Élisabeth Tremblay, (De Mortagne)

### BEST SHORT-FORM WORK IN ENGLISH

"Pawns Dreaming of Roses", Eileen Bell, *Women of the Apocalypse*. Absolute Xpress

"Here There Be Monsters" Brad Carson, *Ages of Wonder*, (DAW)

"Little Deaths" Ivan Dorin, *Tesseract Thirteen*

"Radio Nowhere" Douglas Smith, *Campus Chills*

"The World More Full of Weeping" Robert J. Wiersema, ChiZine Publications

### MEILLEURE NOUVELLE EN FRANÇAIS (Best Short-Form In English)

« Ors blancs » Alain Bergeron, (Solaris 171)

« De l'amour dans l'air » Claude Bolduc, (Solaris 172)

« La vie des douze Jésus » Luc Dagenais, (Solaris 172)

« Billet de faveur » Michèle Laframboise, (Galaxies 41)

« Grains de silice » Mario Tessier, (Solaris 170)

« La mort aux dés » Élisabeth Vonarburg, (Solaris 171)

### BEST WORK IN ENGLISH (OTHER)

*Women of the Apocalypse* (the Apocalyptic Four) Editor, Absolute Xpress

*Ages of Wonder* Julie E. Czerneda, & Robert St. Martin, Editors, DAW Books

*Neo-Opsis Magazine*, Karl Johanson, Editor

*On Spec Magazine*, Diane Walton, Managing Editor, The Copper Pig Writers' Society

*Distant Early Warnings: Canada's Best Science Fiction* Robert J. Sawyer, Editor, Robert J. Sawyer books

### MEILLEUR OUVRAGE EN FRANÇAIS (AUTRE) (Best Work In French (Other))

Critiques. Jérôme-Olivier Allard, (Solaris 169-172)

Revue. Joel Champetier, éditeur, Solaris

Le jardin du general, Manga. Michele Laframboise, Fichtre, Montréal

Rien à voir avec la fantasy. Thibaud Sallé, (Solaris 169)

Chronique «Les Carnets du Futurable». Mario Tessier, (Solaris 169-171)

### ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENT

Kari-Ann Anderson, for cover of "Nina Kimberly the Merciless", Dragon Moon Press

Jim Beveridge, "Xenobiology 101: Field Trip" *Neo-opsis* #16

Lar de Souza, "Looking for Group" online Comic

Tarol Hunt, "Goblins". Webcomic

Dan O'Driscoll, Cover of *Steel Whispers*, Bundoran Press

### FAN ACCOMPLISHMENT (Fanzine)

Jeff Boman, *The Original Universe*

Richard Graeme Cameron, *WCFSAZine*

Dale Speirs, *Opuntia*

Guillaume Voisine, éd. *Brins d'Éternité*

Felicity Walker, *BCSFAzine*

### FAN ACCOMPLISHMENT (Organization)

Renée Benett, for "In Spaces Between" at Con-Version 25

Robbie Bourget, and René Walling, Chairs of "Anticipation", the 67th WorldCon

David Hayman, organization Filk Hall of Fame

Roy Miles, work on USS Hudson Bay Executive

Kirstin Morrell, Programming for Con-Version 25

### FAN ACCOMPLISHMENT (Other)

Roy Badgerow, Astronomy Lecture at USS Hudson Bay

Ivan Dorin, "Gods Anonymous" (Con-Version 25 radio play)

Judith Hayman and Peggi Warner-Lalonde organization, Filk track @ Anticipation

Tom Jeffers and Sue Posteraro, Filk Concert, Anticipation

Lloyd Penney, Fanwriting

# Loscon XXXVI Report

by John Hertz

Reprinted from *Vanamonde* 863-865

About 1,100 attended Loscon XXXVI, our local convention, currently at the L.A. Int'l Airport Marriott Hotel; Author Guests of Honor Steven Barnes & Tananarive Due, Artist GoH Tim Rickard, Fan GoH Christian McGuire; Art Show sales \$6,800 by 47 artists.

In the Art Show, building the Rotsler Award exhibit of the 2009 winner Dan Steffan, I had the help of Jan Bender & Gary Echternacht, Robert Jansen, and Wolfcat. I found Rickard finishing his exhibit and brought him over. Drawing *Brewster Rockit* since 2004 he knew not our community. "That's professional," he said; "you mean this guy is an amateur?" Chris Garcia's Fanzine Lounge was full of fanzines, fanart displays, and fanziners; España Sheriff and Leigh Ann Hildebrand hosted the Fanzine Lounge by Night on the party floor. I finally brought something Hildebrand would drink.

On Friday afternoon I moderated "Women in S-F," D.M. Atkins, Due, Shauna Roberts, Sharan Volin. Roberts said publishers think boys won't read about girls but girls will read about boys. Atkins said her 13-year-old son was very particular. Due said she had a 17-year-old protagonist who was indecisive, like other 17-year-olds. Volin said some games let one pick a female or a male character. A woman in the audience said she missed *femmes fatales*. Then a book talk on *The Man in the High Castle*. Bruce Briant in the audience said "Where's the science?"; in ch. 7 Betty & Paul Kasoura take up that very point. We noted the wealth of falsities: even Mr. Tagomi has an empty briefcase.

After Regency Dancing, I took Sheriff who was off duty awhile to the party Paul Turner

threw in memory of Bill Rotsler, though we missed Jerry Pournelle and Tim Powers. Then Keith Kato's chili. Then the Seattle for Westercon LXV bid party. Two a.m. in Operations, Chinese-style Mah Jongg going strong. Someone said "I'm sorry I didn't say goodbye to you, I was talking to the police."

Saturday morning at 10, to moderate "Blurring the Lines," Atkins, Laura Frankos, Val Ontell. Atkins said different genres have different expectations. I noted how Frankos' husband de-Anglicized his name to Turteltaub for a different book. Computers, she said, look at an author's name, and order according to how many the last book over that name sold. Ontell noted how the 2001 book *Seabiscuit* drew interest outside the horse genre.

Toni Weisskopf took my tour of the Art Show. I was glad to see a set of woodwork spaceships by Johnna Klukas. One, dark as the void, gleamed with stars. Guessing right I used my magic tour-leader power to open the ships: they

were boxes. "For the rest of you," I said, "try this only at home." Then a talk on *From the Earth to the Moon*. We liked the pace and wit. It detailed conceiving the project, building, and firing, then ended. I loved Michel Ardan's superb four words "I won't come back."

At 2:30 to moderate "There's a Bimbo on the Cover of My Book," Laura Brodian, Amy Casil. Brodian, widow of Kelly Freas, said he read all he illustrated, often several times; yet authors might not grasp illustration, and he used to crack "I prefer my authors dead." Casil with a lapsize computer showed 200 color images of book and magazine covers suitable to the topic. Then Lisa & Harold Harrigan's 32nd-anniversary party, where pleasant signs explained  $32 = 2^4 + 4^2$  and  $1^1 + 2^2 + 3^3$ . Then España Sheriff's Art Show tour. Then shopping with co-hosts Becky Thomson and Tom Veal for the Prime Time Party at which, every Loscon from 1 a.m. Sunday till dawn, we try for good food, drink, talk.

Ten a.m. Sunday, to moderate "World Domination," Brad Lyau, V.J. Waks, she saying everyone had an internal ape that made us dominate, he full of overseas experiences which, like Lao Tzu, said *maybe not*. Then a talk on *Brain Wave*. We praised its poetry, in both the small sense of its choice of words, and the large sense of its choice of incident. We discussed whether its vignettes, which carried breadth, left loose ends. This was a book of pain and hope. Then cleaning, the Dead Dog party and another in the Fanzine Lounge by Night, and eventually home.



**Tim Powers, Diana Glycer, Rick Foss and Tony Todaro** at 2009 Loscon.

# WexWorlds: a prejudiced report.

## by James Bacon, Festival Curator

WexWorld's was the first Sci-Fi and Fantasy Fiction Festival to be held in Wexford, a beautiful small town of 20,000 people situated on the southeast corner of the island of Ireland. The town is next to Rosslare, a harbour that serves, Pembroke and Fishguard in Wales, and Cherbourg and Calais in France. Waterford Airport has flights directly from Luton, and Dublin is about a two hour drive away to the north.

The festival was the brain child of author Eoin Colfer who is widely popular for his Artemis Fowl series of children's books and as the man who brought us a sequel to the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy *And Another Thing...*

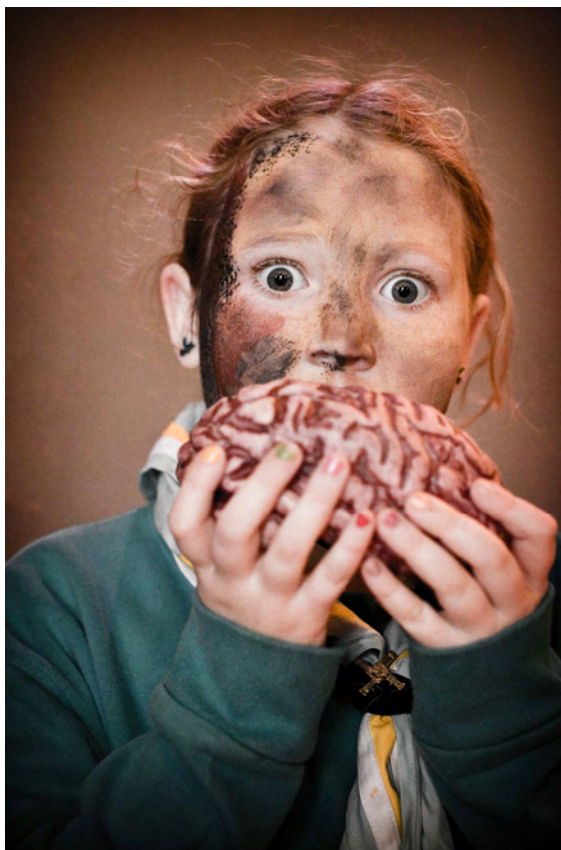
Eoin approached Elizabeth Whyte, director of The Wexford Arts Centre about having a festival, and then when he came to the 2009 Eastercon he saw some of the potential of a science fiction event in general, enjoyed meeting and talking with fans, loved the welcome he received on stage, and was obviously cheered by it all. He approached me to come on board as a curator, with himself as patron on an offer I could hardly refuse and which intrigued me.

Eoin Colfer is a science fiction fan and reader so the idea of having a science fiction event in his home town, was wish fulfilment. It was going to be a tough time for him, though. He would have completed a book tour in the UK, USA and Germany just before the festival.

The festival concept is different from a convention in many ways. First off, it's spread across the whole town with activities and events in a variety of places -- three bookshops, three hotels, a *bona fide* Art Gallery, two Goth clothing shops, the town theatre/hall, the town library and the Wexford Arts Centre.

Secondly, activities are targeted at age groups, with specific teen and children events, other items for all ages, and items for adults. Over the course of the weekend a variety of activities take place, such as talks and readings, science experiments, comic art workshops, an exhibition on the process of writing for a comic, fun and active participatory activities for younger

*Right: Filip Naum's photos of two kids' events at Wexworlds.*  
© Filip Naum 2009.



children, discussions about fantastic literature, a selection of competitions and a cabaret.

Thirdly it's funded by commercial sponsors, several national and local government bodies, and the Wexford Arts Centre itself.

In addition to Eoin Colfer, we had Cirque Du Freak author Darren Shan, Herbie Brennan author of the Faerie Wars, Paul J Holden, artist for 2000AD's Judge Dredd comic and the upcoming Garth Ennis written Happy Valley. Nick Roche, comic artist for Transformers, Oisín McGann, author of *Small-Minded Giants* and *Strangled Silence*, Sarah Rees Brennan, author of *The Demon's Lexicon*, Michael Carroll, 2000AD comic writer and author of the The New Heroes series, and Robert Curley, writer on Freakshow comic and comic book publisher for Atomic Diner. Quite a varied and eclectic bunch, and let's be honest, quite a superb assortment.

The arts centre is in the old Corn Exchange building, and has been refurbished to high standards, so now there is a Cafe, a theatre for 110 people, which with the flick of a switch, can smoothly and automatically become an open space for 200, two art galleries, which both had exhibition by Vera Klute, who is an emerging young artists and offices.

Vera Klute is quite the inspired artist, with a variety of installations, mixed media and artwork, which was very science fictional, that fit in with the whole theme of the weekend; she came along to give a docent tour of the gallery. (Note the stolen term)

With the weekend upon us, Ireland took it upon itself to deftly sink in parts; the phrase 'grand soft day' was rapidly replaced with 'Jesus Mary, Mother of God.' The weather was atrocious, 12 inches of rain in a day. One guest was trapped and another feared his house would drown.

Yet this did not deter, and with national and local press interested in the whole affair, I was pleased to hear Eoin say on during a live radio interview on Thursday that Rick Deckard was his favourite science fiction character.

The festival had a good start on Friday despite the heavy rain, and the first

event was Eoin giving a talk to school children in Dun Mhuire, a classic theatre hall on the main street. Schools from all over the county were bussing in children, and by 11 a.m., there were 644 children in this hall. It was an awesome sight, especially if you get them cheering and booing, as I did in my introduction to Eoin. Eoin then had them laughing and screaming as he gave a reading and told stories, mostly of his childhood, or about the hilarious consequences of the language differences between Ireland and the United States of America. As the children left there was no shortage of happy faces, although this may be because they had all missed about four hours of school, and hopefully Irish class at that.

Oisín McGann gave a Library talk which was excellent, he is very personable with kids, but the best bit was at the end. The library was one of the venues where we had free comics, so the kids went into a bit of a frenzy at the end, taking comics. An example of

Eoin's conscientiousness is that given the weather, he had said if Oisín had any problems, he would step in and do the readings. The man has a can do – will do – conrunner approach at times, which endears him no end.

That evening we were back in the Arts Centre, the mothership as we had started to call it, and Chairman of the Borough Council, Anna Fenlon opened the festival, with quite a few councillors and TD's (MP's) in attendance. Eoin spoke well and the large pillar room gallery was full.

Then Dr Emma J. King gave a Liquid Nitrogen talk upstairs in the theatre and made instant ice cream, a full house again, and hugely popular. Lots of cheering and excitement as the experiments took place, the smashing of a frozen apple with a hammer being especially popular.

This was followed by Eoin and Andrew Donkin's amazing talk about the mechanics of comics. They have produced two Artemis Fowl adaptations, and they sell very well. Andrew had a whole presentation going into the details of the creation of Artemis Fowl comics, and both men know their work, taking time to explain the process and answer many questions.



**Eoin Colfer** with a few hundred friends at Wexworlds Library Talk.

Eoin and Andrew had produced, free of charge, for all present an eight page comic, entitled *The Last Crusade through Water and Fire*. A mix of legend and mythology as well as a beautiful twist in time. The comic was drawn by Giovanni Rigano, so essentially the Artemis Fowl team did a free comic, and it was produced to the highest of standards. This was given away to all at this event.

Meanwhile, across the town in a hotel, Sarah Rees Brennan did a superb job leading the discussion on Paranormal Romance. Eoin's talk was followed by a cosplay teen disco which was more cosplay, live Gig, with teen band Discord. This is something that we need to change for next year, having band(s) is great, much more real. The tech set up in the arts centre was amazing, beyond anything I have worked with before -- 30 minutes to go from discussion set-up to full band rig, including monitors and everything. They have the equipment in situ with an excellent tech team. It was very easy.

Saturday, Day Two, began with a strong sun bitterly shinning down coldly on a damp Wexford. Nearby Enniscorthy was now impassable. Undeterred the young Jedi of Wexford were.

You just cannot beat duct tape, plastic piping and foam, for shutting children up, yes the light sabre shenanigans was very popular. Especially exciting was the more violent football jersey wearing kid who decided he was going to single handedly murder everyone, I was impressed with his energy, so took him on myself, and enjoyed teaching him rubbish moves, that made perfect sense to both of us.

The library continued to be a good focus of activity, Sarah Rees Brennan is an awesome girl, so delightful, and she is also very with it, her reading went well, paranormal romance is very popular, although it is a rebranding of a sub genre of Horror that has always been around. More serious discussions about whether comics are just for boys seemed to spark a lot of interest.

Darren Shan turned up in ample time for his signing and he had a monstrous queue, he was excellent, from Elephant and Castle in London and now living in Limerick, Ireland. It was nice to chat with someone who knows where Croydon is. He is beyond nice, and was especially good with his younger fans and when he signed he wrote out individual long inscriptions, tailored to the reader -- awesome. He looks like an indie rock star, which might DJ of an evening, in a hoodie top, a stylish jacket and with curly hair and a real cheeky smile. His queue was becalmed with tense excitement.

By Saturday Dr Emma had a Wexford fan club. Her talk about the science in Eoin's book, "And Another Thing", was well attended. Children took every opportunity to run down to the stage to stare at her more closely. They were fascinated as she spoke about Dark Matter, planet-forming and many aspects divined from the Hitchhiker book. This was something that really impressed me. Dr Emma is able to keep a whole audience entertained, she is very personable, while her knowledge enthusiasm and also the good slides and use of the actual book made this a very entertaining talk. She worked closely with Eoin Colfer on this, quizzing him and going into detail on his scientific useage, in

the book. Education by stealth.

Meanwhile, I was unsure how a comic workshop would work out, but it filled to capacity (24 youths) and they made very good use of all the materials we brought along. Is it natural that kids will attempt to up their game, when provided with professional equipment?

The big show of the day was Darren Shan and Eoin Colfer in conversation. This was Darren's idea, he thought they could entertain by having a more informal conversation, and he was dead right. They had the audience in stitches of laughter, and he was very insightful about his questions. They both read some, and it was a great 'discussion' -- the two of them are very funny, Eoin has the ability of a stand-up comedian, and paired with Darren it was great laugh-out-loud humor. Afterwards they signed and signed and signed for long never-ending queues of fans. All types of books were signed, it was pretty awesome.

Later, Eoin gave a talk about *And Another Thing*. He read part of it and then went into many details about the book and how it actually came about, how he wrote it and how he felt about it. Then came a stream of questions. Interestingly the attitude of fans prior to publication was talked about -- and it was not a good aspect. Eoin told of how he was just going to turn off the internet, as groups of people who 'hate Eoin Colfer' seemed to spring up. But he explains:

"I was on Face book, and along the side there's a bar inviting you to join this and that. I ignore them, but one day a bar came up: 'The Stop Eoin Colfer Writing Hitchhiker's Society'. It's random. It must have gone out to millions of people.

"I joined, and it turned out to be the best thing I could have done. I decided to post messages saying, you know what - Yes, Eoin Colfer is an asshole. I've known him for many years and I don't like him' and 'Eoin Colfer spent an entire summer with a Bay City Rollers scarf around his wrist' and 'Eoin Colfer buys jeans online . . . in the teenager section'

'I decided: that is the attitude to have, to have a sense of humour.'

He said this was very therapeutic and also that his wife was a strong support.

This was interesting and I pondered how shameful some Hitchhiker fans were, in their unnecessary vitriol, and how at the end of the day, it's a regular bloke who they are being nasty about, from the comfort of their armchair. I have always felt it wrong to judge a book before it is published and that the customer can decide to not buy a product, but abuse and pure spite is just wrong. It was a good talk though; again some insightful questions came from the audience.

That evening, then came the cabaret.

Caca Millis Cabaret is a regular light



**Zombies on the loose** at Wexworlds. (Pp.28, 29 ©Filip Naum 2009.)

entertainment evening at the arts centre; first off we had the hostess Helena Mulkhern, looking French and signing Duke Ellington and Edith Piaf. Then we had a belly dancer with a sword, Alexandra Drafilova from the Khelashi Dancers, it was, well, we had to stop men and women running to the stage to be fascinated.

Local musician, on the acoustic guitar, Paul Creane was next, with Seamus, on mouth organ and occasional guitar accompaniment. Sarah Rees Brennan made everyone

laugh with a short reading from her, book, and then a reading by Oran Ryan, one that was full of metaphor and insight, followed by some really great poetry readings (yes, I said that) by Patrick Chapman, I especially liked "Darwin's Vampire," "Saint Dracula" (which had everyone pissing themselves laughing) and his reading of his title poem, from his book *A Shopping Mall on Mars*, was very science fictional.

But then, there was something really rare and delightful. Eoin Colfer had said a few times during the day that he would be reading something that he had never read out loud before, something that most people did not even know about, something that he could never read to kids.

And so, he appeared on stage, with a book of crime stories, set deeply hidden away in dark pages about Dublin, he read a story he had written. This was not the Eoin Colfer we know. This was a different dark, Irvine Welsh sort of author, writing about track-suited guerriers, a crime boss, and inner city life, but with a streak of black humour that was impressive. There was a Batman reference in the story which drove the gathered crowd, who had been guffawing and laughing, to cheering and it was very good, violent, dark, and full of vulgarity and abuse and dublinisms.

The weekend was made.

More music, Jacques Brel's "The Port of Amsterdam," and some amazing footage by a local teenager Chris O'Neil who was on stage, and due to the baying of the crowd, was forced to endure an encore and replaying.

Then, as things wound up, we had a humorous clip, and it went dark and quiet, and then we saw a man in an attic, scurrying nearly, being pursued, and a real hush befall



**Dr. Emma** works her frozen magic.



*Seated:* Ray Bradbury, Norman Corwin, George Clayton Johnson. *Standing:* Cody Goodfellow, John Tomerlin, Lisa Morton, Earl Hamner Jr., John Shirley, William J. Nolan.

the venue, and we saw Rick Deckard slip and fall, and grip to a girder for dear life, and as Roy Batty saved his live a real tingle ran through the audience, and then, we all watched, and some even cried, as we watched what must be the best science fictional movie moment of all time.

No humour, no postmodern ironic bull, no laughs, just the words as they were meant to be seen. Not much could follow that, really, and the night shortly drew to a close.

Sunday continued apace, and again, the *Zombie Morning* was filled, as was the word games session and the discussion about *V for Vendetta* and *Watchmen*. Film director John Vaughan gave a run through of the original *Thing*, and this was very good, he would fast forward through boring bits, highlight hilarity or brilliance, and give all present a new perspective on the movie.

Eoin again was involved in discussions about turning books, into visual imagery, whether it is comics, or illustrations accompanying a book, or the covers.

All the authors attended a relaxed coffee meet and greet in one of the book shops, where people just walked up and talked about their work, in a very informal and chilled way. It was no surprise that the bookshops had stacks of *And Another Thing*, and even those that did not sell, were requested to be signed. Eoin is definitely a prophet in his own land.

Overall, the weekend went very well. A departure from conventions, yet with many good similarities. With the majority of the items free of charge it's hard to work out how many people in total attended. Eoin's first item alone had 644 children at it, and when we added all the ticket sales and full houses, it's over 3,000 seats, whether that's

3,000 people, is doubtful, but 1,500 to 2,000, quite easily. The format allows people to pop in specifically and enjoy something, without committing to a whole weekend, while those who encamped were able to get to everything.

The relaxed and genial atmosphere, and no-stress attitude of an event in Ireland also came across well to those who had travelled from afar. A family from Austin Texas become local celebrities, as it was learned that they had travelled to Ireland, for one reason, to be at that festival. As the father explained, where

else would you meet so many amazing authors. He was joined in this sentiment, by fans from the UK, all over Ireland, notably Donegal, and Europe despite the weather.

Overall, it was a good weekend, I was pleased, thankfully, at how well everything went, and was happy at how well the various panels, discussions and activities were received.

Eoin and Eliz have already started work on next year, and I would hope you all put November 26-28 into your diaries and consider making it over for the second festival. I will be once again, The Curator.

*[[A much short version of this report was published in Mostly Harmless the Hitch Hiker Guide to The Galaxy Appreciation Society newsletter. ]]*

### Timing

Fierce media attention to the security measures that kept each new Harry Potter book locked away until the moment sales officially began left me thinking the release date must be important.

Then I read Gail Carriger say that *Changeless*, sequel to Crompton Crook nominee *Soulless*, was already popping up in bookstores before the official release like an impatient Spring bloom.

Whether it's a few days or weeks early — Amazon says her book was due to be released March 30, Orbit's catalog said April 10 — Carriger sounded positively cheerful about a photo showing copies already on sale well in advance of both dates: "Blake snapped this shot of *Changeless* ~ on shelves (apparently) now! Look, Gentle Reader, I practically have a whole shelf to myself. This is very exciting for an author and some sort

of mile marker that I am convinced should be rewarded, if not with shoes, at least with a very large piece of chocolate mouse [*sic*]."

Wouldn't J.K. Rowling have called Interpol, MI5, the Ticktockman or somebody?

### Bradbury Featured at Bleeding Edge Signing

Ray Bradbury and other contributors to the *The Bleeding Edge* signed copies of the book at the Mystery and Imagination Bookstore in Glendale, CA on February 20.

John King Tarpinian was there: "Very nice event. The only ones missing in action were Richard and R.C. Matheson due to their having forgotten that it was Richard's birthday when they committed to attend. Darn. We hope that he will be making it to the Charles Beaumont documentary premiere next month. Everybody else listed on the flyer was in attendance plus John Shirley came down from the Bay Area."

### Ray Bradbury Week is Coming

The City of Los Angeles will celebrate Ray Bradbury Week beginning August 22, his 90th birthday.

Steven Paul Leiva started pushing the idea July when his essay "Searching for Ray Bradbury" was posted on the *LA Times'* Hero Complex blog. An advisor to LA City Council President Eric Garcetti has agreed with his suggestion to pass a resolution dedicating the week to Ray.

Leiva's celebration is gathering momentum, with the LA Public Library and the Writers Guild considering how they will participate. And the newspapers and TV stations will be getting involved too.

### Star Man

Ray Bradbury, who was awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 2002, like all the other honorees has been getting extra attention lately because the *Los Angeles Times* is creating a database of features about them. Apart from adding Ray's photo, his entry is still generic but it should be one of the easiest to research.

Bradbury's star is at 6644 Hollywood Boulevard, which is on the south side of the street in front of Larry Edmunds Bookshop.

Bradbury received his star in a ceremony attended by Mayor James Hahn of Los Angeles, Johnny Grant (the "honorary Mayor of Hollywood"), Charlton Heston and other dignitaries. It was the kickoff event for "One Book, One City LA," built around Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*.



## Hertz' On My Sleeve Zine Helps TAFF, DUFF

A collection of John Hertz' fanwriting, *On My Sleeve*, is available for a donation of at least US\$5 or equivalent to TAFF (the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund) or DUFF (the Down Under Fan Fund).

Donate in local money payable to the Fund Administrator; ask that JH be notified, who will then mail the zine.

For TAFF: Steve Green, 33 Scott Rd, Solihull B92 7LQ, England, U.K.; Chris Garcia, 962 W. Weddell Dr. #15, Sunnyvale, CA 94089, U.S.A.

For DUFF: Emma Hawkes, 9/36 Cape St., Osborne Park, WA 6017, Australia; Sue & Steve Francis, P.O. Box 58009, Louisville, KY 40268, U.S.A.

## Ackerman Tributes Among Rondo Nominees

Online voting has begun for the 8th Annual Rondo Hatton Classic Horror Awards.

Nominees for Best Article of 2009 include two tributes to the late Forrest J Ackerman.

Steve Vertlieb's "The Most 'Famous Monster' of Them All" originally appeared on his own *Thunder Child* site and was recently added to the newly-relaunched *Famous Monsters* website.

Daniel Kirk's "How I Met the Man Behind Famous Monsters of Filmiland" reminisces about the day Ackerman's 1963 cross-country tour stopped at his house in Columbus, Ohio. His article ran in *Scary Monsters* #70.

Up for Best Book of 2009 is Bill Warren's *Keep Watching the Skies, American Science Fiction Movies of the 1950s, the 21st Century Edition*, the revised and expanded edition of the classic film study.

Any fan can vote. Send an e-mail containing your name and your picks to David Colton (taraco at aol.com) by April 3.



# Theme Songs

**By Mike Glycer:** Reading about the death of Vic Mizzy, composer of *The Addams Family*'s playful, finger-snapping theme made me remember many other 1960s TV theme songs. As they began to replay in my mind there seemed no end. Of course, I spent more hours watching television during that decade than in any other.

Probabilities aside, I wonder if theme songs were more important to marketing a series in the 1960s than later in the history of television. It wasn't just the successful shows like the *Munsters* or *The Addams Family* or that had unforgettable songs. There were plenty of shows whose catchy themes have outlasted all the other memories.

I loved Richard Rogers main theme for *The Great Adventure*, a short-lived American history anthology series that aired in the fall of 1963. And I can still hum the theme from the otherwise forgettable astronauts-meet-cavemen series *It's About Time* ("It's about time, it's about space, About two men in the strangest place It's about time, it's about space, About two men in the strangest place.")

This represented a transaction from 1950s series which often chose public domain classics, as *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* used "Funeral March of a Marionette."

There were memorable exceptions, such as Henry Mancini's theme for *Peter Gunn*. The *Rawhide* theme that so engraved itself in a generation's memory that it was an obvious subject of a joke in the movie *Blues Brothers*, being the only country-western tune they knew. And the lyrics to *Car 54 Where Are You?* were fodder for endless *Mad Magazine* parodies. (Proving what a small world it is, when *Car 54* ended and its two leads went their separate ways, Fred Gwynn ended up on *The Munsters* and Joe E. Ross on *It's About Time*.)

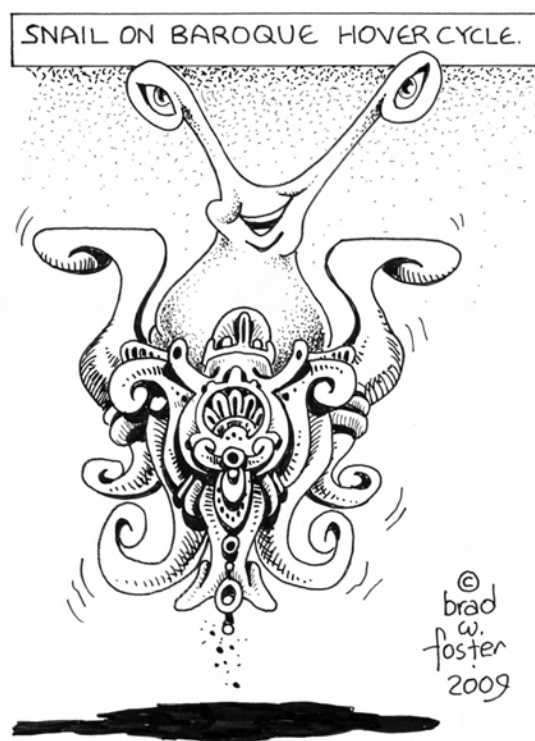
We know that in the early days of television some decisions were made in the hopeful expectation that a show would go on for years, like some popular radio programs had. Originally, when networks launched a prime-time show they ordered a full season's worth of shows, a 39-episode run. The shows that bombed died a lingering death.

TV science fiction commonly had themes that were more powerful than the scripts. I still enjoy hearing the opening music for *The Time Tunnel* but I'll never need to see another re-run.

The instrumental opening of *Lost in Space*, a tune far superior to the silly stories, is one of the most science-fictional-sounding themes of any show from the genre. Its music had the cadence of a navigational instrument desperately pinging for traces of the familiar, and the repeating cycles dramatized the unfulfilled search for home.

Ironically, while *Star Trek* was a much better-written show, if that Alexander Courage theme hadn't been playing while a starship zoomed past the credits would I have thought of it as science fiction music? I doubt it. Such a shrill and breezy tune sounded like the excited humming of a classroom of high school girls preparing for to a formal dance featuring Xavier Cugat and his orchestra.

Since the Sixties there seem to have been far fewer TV themes that have remained a vivid part of the popular culture. Nearly everybody can sing *The Brady Bunch Theme* song. (Well, I can't. I alone remain pure...)



# PORT SODERICK STATION

## BY JAMES BACON



**James Bacon** enjoying his footplate time on the Christmas train.

My good friends Dr. Emma J. King and Jon Ely moved to the Isle of Man a few years ago. They were escaping the great metropolis of London, not so much tired of London, they are still frequent visitors, but tired of London life, which can be at a pace that is unforgiving and unpleasant. It's easy to get caught in the machine; somehow, they slipped out of the way of the cogs.

They bought a house, sensibly, but it also happens to be perhaps every school boys dream, as it was once a fine Victorian Railway station on the Southern Line. Port Soderick Station is quite large for an intermediate stop and is a fine impressive building that looks like a busy and important station.

It came about because there is a Manx National Glen adjacent, leading by a beautiful mile walk to a very nice bay and beach. The railway station opened in 1874 as this was once a hugely popular tourist spot, with a Hotel, Bar, eateries and amusements facing the bay, attractions included, Milking on the beach, smugglers caves, a mystery about an Island, a *camera obscura*, as well as jaunts into the sea from a jetty.

As well as being served by the Isle of Man Railway (IMR), the Douglas Head Marine Drive Tramway, that ran along the coast, from

Douglas, was extended to Port Soderick. At the terminus high upon the northern cliffs overlooking the bay, there was a Chair Lift, described as an inclined railway but which seems to have been a proper funicular railway with very nice enclosed carriages, which was put in place in 1898, one of four Cliff railways on the island. The DHMD Tramway closed during WW1 and ceased operation during WW2 and was dismantled in 1948. The route was turned into a roadway.

Initially Port Soderick IMR station had simple shelters, which with the popularity of the resort, led to the construction of the station building.

So the Station was built. The lower floor has a Ticket and Stations Masters Office, then a Waiting Room that had two open fireplaces and a Kitchen for staff. The second floor was accommodation of the Station Master, four ample rooms.

The proportions are fine and now there is a mezzanine in the waiting room, giving an idea of the amount of space in the building. The Ticket Office is now a very large study, the station masters flat are the bedrooms and bathrooms and the Kitchen is the Kitchen. It's a nice large open country style Kitchen, although with all very

modern amenities and very beautifully done, with an Aga that looks like it could be easily converted into a Mark V land leviathan.

The amazing aspect of this station house is that the railway is still operating, but of course, it gets better, it's the Isle of Man Steam Railway, (IMR) with steam trains running on three-foot narrow gauge.

There is a passing loop built at the station and in 2002 the station was improved and a platform was built for this loop, so the houses balustrade is flush with the line, and at the end of the house as well as opposite are platforms. There are very nice wooden shelters on the Platform and there is a workman's hut at the Douglas end of the station, it's all quite wonderful, and this is where I was staying for a weekend.

I wake to the sound of my alarm going off, and roll over, we had been playing a variety of games the night beforehand, which were great fun, but fruit cider in 750ml bottles that slides down really easy, and getting up do not mix well.

I rolled over, and fell back asleep, but the IMR is its own alarm clock, and at about ten past ten, there was the tooting of whistles, and I managed to get up throw some clothes on and open the curtains to



see a beautiful red engine bringing in a rake of carriages. The noise, clackety clacking the steam, the smoke, an amazing way to enter the day.

The train is being banked up from Douglas as far as Port Soderick a 1-in 60 incline, and these are special trains, only running as far as Santon, as they are Christmas Santa Specials. Port Soderick is being used as a passing loop as well as an uncoupling point.

Banking means that they put a second engine at the rear, to push, this is a form of insurance, if the lead engine fails, it means a rescue is at hand, otherwise it becomes very easy and not convoluted, which given the nature of the passengers, is undesirable. Also the weather means that there is a risk of Low Rail Head Adhesion which means the trains wheels can experience wheel slip, and lose traction, a second engine keeping the consist in motion helps avoid that.

So there I was looking down from the room I slept in, at men uncoupling a steam train. It does not get much better. The Light engine travels back up the line to Douglas, and then the rest of the train moves on to Santon. For signalling purposes, the driver is handed a Baton, a long metal stick that is a physical token that means he has the section. There is a signal at the entrance of the station, a home signal, this indicates entry is allowed.

I come down and potter about, I know the trains go on the hour, or so they are meant to, from Douglas, and with this one taking 12 minutes to get to Port Soderick, I reckon I can shower and have a coffee and then go out and see the next arrival. This is the station house, so there is no where closer to be. From the Kitchen door that looks south west, one has a view of the line to Santon. So at about ten past I head out. The two railway men who have been waiting in their van, have been joined by two enthusiasts, and two passenger trains arrive, the banking engine uncouples, reverses out of the station and pulls back into the loop and couple to the engine from Santon, so now we have a double header.

This involves six moves.

Santon Train, into Station. Douglas Train into station loop. Banking Engine uncoupled, out of station.

Points changed both ends, and these are hand points, but with a wonderful large metal wheel, like that on a sailing ship. These controlled the signals, to allow trains into the stations.

Then the banking train runs back into the loop, couples to the Douglas train and then both trains move off. Then the men reset the points so that trains from Douglas are coming in on the line.

Then the actual points, which are hand points are thrown, and the railway men pass over the tokens if needs be between drivers, and the trains are given the 'OFF' and proceed. Communications with Santon and Douglas are then made, using the hand held radio, and normal professional railway radio protocols.

I stop and say hello to the men, and briefly chat. I mention I am a driver, and it turns out one of the enthusiasts is an ex-driver, from IMR, thirty four years a driver, while the other enthusiast has been visiting the isle of man for fifty years, having first visited at the age of four, and hailing from Keighthly in Yorkshire. I go in and intend to make some coffee, and get some paper; I come and offer some tea or coffee. I sit on the balustrade and we all chat and have a warm drink. Talk is about railway issues, which whether it is an EMU going at 100 mph or a Steam Engine going at 30 mph, seem to have many common factors.



Emma then came out and offered us tea and coffee and was pleased to see we were already looked after. Soon enough time is passing at the Railway men need to go to their positions. And again the movements occurred.

Dave and Dave are the names of the 'Per Way' men, meaning Permanent Way. We call them P-way in London, and in some places they are known as Line Men. They work the tracks, maintain and build, and know the line very well. They have an unusual task this weekend, but enjoy it, and are friendly.

There is quite a lot going on in this station, a lot of movements. Not to be underestimated, it must all go according to plan each time, a simple mistake a point miss thrown, or an error and a derailment could occur. These men are professionals of the highest order, as important as the Driver or Guard, who rely on these men that everything is

bang on, right down to a tightened nut.

The Isle of Man is definitely a railway haven.

In Douglas on Friday we went in and had some tea and coffee in the Railway station restaurant. The existing building is the best vegetarian eatery on the island, but the building and interior is still very much the same, as photos show. There are models of various trains on track running above the picture rail and it's a very nice dark wooded and relaxed place. Outside, there is work going on. At the end of the station there is the engine and carriage sheds, I wander down the deserted platform and take some photos of some shunting movements.

The Isle of Man is a haven for the enthusiast of rail. From the Station, it is a short walk along the quay to the ferry terminal, where in the summer there are the Douglas Bay Horse Drawn Trams. These trams run along the seafront to Derby Castle which is also the terminus for the Manx Electric Railway (MER), which are Trams that run off Over head electricity. There is a level of commuter connectivity about the Isle of Man that is mildly boggling. It really is well connected. At Derby Castle, there is the DBHT depot, it's closed up now, but outside at the MER terminus, there is a massive and very old looking mobile crane and a tram.

Emma suggests that we go to Laxey, I had hoped to get to Port Erin, as that is the terminus for the line that goes by Port Soderick, and I know there is a bookshop there. Emma is rather like myself, and with a glint in her eye, she explains she reckons we can do both, and also that the engineering of the Laxey wheel is well worth seeing. We travel in a Subaru Forrester, which is not a Truck, but a car with a little higher clearance, and in 4x4 mode, an ability that is equal to many larger Chelsea tractors. I like this type of vehicle, and would be torn between an Audi A6 All Road and the Volvo XC70 Cross Country.

We reckon we can do both towns.

Laxey used to have mines, and these were pumped out by massive water driven wheel, known as the Laxey Wheel, quite an interesting feat of engineering. Liam Proven had mentioned in London that the Miners Tavern, in Laxey, which was at a point where two railways, the Manx Electric Railway and the Snaefell Mountain Railway, which are on different gauges, Snaefell is on 3' 6", meet, and there is a Yard for Trams and a shed, and much switching gear, all in front of the Pub. There is even a siding towards the pub, identified as such.

The road to Laxey, from Douglas, passes by Derby Castle Depot, for the MER, and the road then runs next to the Railway lines, nearly all the way there. So that's pretty cool as we see the lay of the land as

one would do on board an MER service. The trains are not running at this time of year.

On the way to Laxey, we pass the turn for the Groundle Glen Railway, another narrow gauge operation, with a 2' gauge, still in working order, although in the lashings of rain, and torrential weather, it is also wisely closed at this time of year. This railway was purely to cater for tourists travelling from the MER down the glen half a mile, where there was also a Zoo. It opened in 1896, and despite closing for both wars, there was a hiatus between 1950 and 1981, when supporters of the IMR then decided to restore the railway, which had virtually been lost, even the engines were in disparate parts of the UK and most of the buildings knocked down. Now they have a beautiful station terminus and Swiss style canopy at Lhen Coan, where there is also an engine shed. The original steam engine Sea Lion is still running, and is joined by a number of diesels and a battery electric locomotive replica, of one that was used in the inter war years, unsuccessfully.

Soon we are in Laxey, and driving up some serous roads, towards the wheel, and winding into a deserted car park to look at the massive engineering achievement that is the Lady Isabella. It is quite huge, very beautiful, but the stiles are locked, and although one could easily step over them, we just take it in, the weather is now that penetrating drizzly rain, that higher up the mountains looks like a thickening mist, so there mountain tops are obscured, but this wheel is not. It really is very fantastic.

The whole mining complex was powered by water; this is a water wheel that in turn pumped out the mines, but with an abundance of free and fast flowing water, the Victorian engineers, made full use of the asset.

There is a second smaller water wheel down near the town in the area that was once the Washing Floors, of the mine, this, the Snaefell Wheel, has travelled around a variety of places in the UK, and it's now been fully restored, after pieces of it were found in a farm yard. This wheel is in the Laxey Glen Gardens, which includes the washing floors, but we can spy the top of it, it is somewhat smaller. There is also the Great Laxey Mine Railway, which runs from the mouth of the mine, to the washing floors, and is a 1-foot 7-inch gauge. This passes under the MER. The railway was not used from 1929, and in 2004 it was re-opened with replica steam engines.

The car park we careened into to see the Lady Isabella was also the site of the Laxey Browside Tramway, which would have been an incredible link, from the Mine to the wheel, but that is long gone. A five foot gauge 1-in-4 gradient counterbalanced railway, it had two cars, which were brought up the hill using water, like everything else in Laxey, as power. So here in this town, which admittedly employed some 600 miners, at the end of the nineteenth century, and has a population of about 1,800 people, there is no end of Victorian engineering, and three running rail operations.

I try and enjoy the amazing experience, despite the weather; it is truly a wonderful moment, this massive structure jutting up into the sky. Emma, ever the scientist, seems to enjoy my fascination.

We then adjourn to the Miners Tavern, as Liam had suggested that this would be a good spot for a beer, as there is a bit of memorabilia in the pub. I am quite impressed to find that the physical bar in the pub has been fashioned on a Tram. So the bar is in the livery of a MER Tram, along with company crest, and a roof along the bar, with regular supports, replicating to windows of a tram. There is even a pull string the length of the roof, it's brilliant.

We chat with some locals, after taking some liquid refreshment, some photographs, reading some Manx, which is very much so the same as Gaelic, so I can easily speak it, and generally being a nuisance, we continue, now in darkness towards Port Erin.

In this Subaru, which is essentially based on a Imprezza, a World Rally car, with four wheel drive on, and Emma giving directions, thanks to her iPhone, there is something of the cross country

adventure about the drive, as we cut across the island, over the mountains, along single lane roads, and curves and bends that disappear into an murky darkness. It's great fun. The wipers are flying and the full beams and spot lights on, it's all go. We get to Port Erin in no time, and easily find the bookshop which is still open. We browse around, and fail to find any new purchases, but it's a pleasantly small and well stocked bookshop, and the lady is very busy calling customers, fulfilling orders and desires. We also take in the Station, which is open to the elements, and also to us. The Canopy giving a momentary respite from the continuous drizzlely damp, the long engine shed, now a Museum, dedicated to the railways of the island, is closed and in darkness. The museum even houses a locomotive from the Ramsey Pier Tramway, and many engines which have stopped working, but are so worth seeing, in immaculate form.

Back to the warmth of Port Soderick then, to be confronted by a rib roast of beef, roast potatoes cooked in goose fat and great company for a relaxing evening that lasts into the night. Port Erin, a place to visit again, we reckon.

Saturday afternoon, is spent popping out, chatting with Dave and Dave the Per-way men, and taking photos. Dave suggests there may be a chance to look around the carriage and engine sheds, as I ask about the Irish diesel railcars that were once used by the County Donegal Railways Committee. These railcars, built in built in 1951, were sold on in 1961, and coupled back to back, as there was insufficient ability to turn them, and ran well. An attempt to restore them in the Eighties and Nineties, led to an issue about finance, it wasn't cheap and they are still unrestored, but nearly there. The CDRJC bought railcars from 1906, and were pioneers in the use of diesel railcars, in the 1930s.

I am keen to see them, mostly as they were part of a big change in railway operations, and these individual ones, were in themselves an improvement on previous CDRJC railcars which had an extended engine, under a hood, where the engine in these is below the cab.

Dave suggests that if I travel to Douglas, and speak to some managers, something may be arranged. I like this idea, and soon arrangements are in place to travel down on the 1 p.m. train. I join the train at Port Soderick, and journey with the Guard. It's interesting that there is a nice moquet on the seating of the island.

It's quite a smooth journey down, and I spend some time chatting first to the guard and then to some station staff. It transpires that getting a look at the carriage sheds is nigh impossible, given the day that is in it, so I am content to take photos and travel back. I advise my hosts, that instead of coming down and collecting me, that they should await my arrival by train.

Then as a surprise, I am offered a space on the footplate of an engine, back to Port Soderick. I am of course in a different world. For some of you, it would be the equivalent of stepping into the Shuttle Atlantis, ready for takeoff.

The space is limited, and it's dirty, with coal soot and dust. I find a place in the entranceway, directly behind the driver, one leg inside, my knee against the interior, and one outside, on the running board, and it's cramped, but wonderful. There are massive lumps of coal on the floor having spilled out of the bunker, and a variety of valves, gauges and levers in front of me, with the fire grate below these confluents of engineering wonders.

Soon we are off and it is a gentle enough start, as we head up the hill, I lean out a little to get a full blast of smoke and steam, and in then to feel the furnace like heat from the fire, and watch through the cab windows, like portholes.

It's magical; there is something very heavy industry about the whole motion and workings. Levers are pulled, by hands protected by rags, smoke and dust and sparks fly in and past, the noise is thunderous, especially when we enter the darkness of a tunnel that seems to foster a feeling of underworldliness. Gauges are monitored,

shouts are called out, signals correct and more coal is flung onto the raging inferno of a fire, the door slammed shut by the shovel, in a motion so strong and steady, that modern materials would shatter and smash with such punishment.

I gulp in clean flying past air, and ensure I am wedged in, it is indeed an experience, and the driver exchanges a few occasional words. We pass a farmer, whose dogs chase us, the driver urging them on as they leap over wall and through hedge, barking in excitement. The winter sky, so clear now, is bright, and the outside cold reminding me that it is a December day, the fire, a welcome heat source as we climb along the heights, looking over the bay.

Soon, way too soon, we are coming round turning more inland towards Port Soderick. I have taken some photos on our journey, and as I arrive in, Emma sees me and also takes a photo. Footplate heaven. I alight and offer many thanks both to the driver and fireman but also to the two Dave's who have had some sort of hand in this, I have quite the smile.

Our adventures for that day was not yet over, and we went to Jurby a small hamlet on the north end of the island where there are plains and much flat land, unusual on this rock, that juts out of the Irish sea, and here a private, once RAF airfield exists. There is also the newly built and world class prison, which can accommodate one hundred prisoners and amongst the industrial and rather modern warehouses, there is one called Jurby Junk. This is two buildings; one is a weird and bizarre collection of plastic toys, umbrellas, old clothes, crockery and well, Junk. The building next to it, also part of the same business, is a little more orderly, in that it has hundreds of feet of bookshelves, and large containers, plastic and wood, full of books. There were also large wicker baskets, with massive amounts of books. There was no order exactly, although some boxes and shelves did seem to contain a type of genre of books.

We arrived here, with about an hour to look through the books, we start and browse. I find a number of containers, with just old penguins, and after a few minutes find a book I have been looking for since February, entitled, *The South African Reich*, part of the African Penguin Library series, and a book I have already read on the ANC website, so straight away it is worthwhile. I had hoped to imbibe in the Jurby Hotel, which utilised the old RAF Mess Halls, but it is very closed and boarded up.

Jurby will have a Museum opening, next Easter (2010) The Manx Transport Trust have been working hard on Hanger 230 at Jurby airfield, photos show they have quite a few vintage buses already stored in the hanger as well as out station in various depots throughout the island. This is an attempt to bring together the various transport, and one presumes, non railway exhibits. They have already had a Vintage Motorbike rally, with 300 bikes running the TT route, and a vintage bid rally. <http://john8642.fotopic.net/>

We soon depart and head off towards Peel. Passing Ballagh on the way. Ballagh is home of the Orchid Line a miniature railway operated by the Manx Steam and Model engineering club, who run a track in the Curragh's wildlife park, nearby. After much work the lines are now a number of loops, and totally 3,042 feet long, some of which is double track. The gauges are 3 1/2", 5" and 7 1/4" and the engines operate as steam, with people sitting astride the 'carriages'

The darkness has crept upon us, suddenly and again it is now drizzly and foggy. I test the four by four's brakes in quite an unorthodox manner, but luckily with no permanent damage. We get to a darkened Peel, and fail to see the castle up on the higher ground, and also fail to pay a visit to the bookshop in Peel as it closed at 4.30pm. We are also too late for the Manx Transportation museum, which is closed, and also in Peel. Although I have assumed this will be subsumed into the new Jurby venue.

Peel is on the Western side of the island, a bit northerly across from Douglas on the Eastern side. The Isle of Man Railway, which ran the line to Port Erin also, had a line from Douglas to Peel. There were plans to link up the railway with Ramsey, but this did not initially occur, so in Ramsey, some took the initiative and the Manx Northern Railway was formed, this took an unusual route, which curved from Ramsey south east towards Peel and turned west to run parallel and later join the IMR line to Douglas, at St John's. There was also a freight line from St. Johns south to Foxdale, opened independently, but operated by the MNR. By the turn of the century, all was not well. The MER route on the eastern side was competing and impacting upon the MNR. In 1905, the MNR was merged by the government with the IOM, and after some serious upgrades, the railway from Ramsey to Douglas was able to compete with the MER, despite seeming twice as long a journey.

The line to Peel and from St John's to Ramsey closed in the late Sixties, the line to Port Erin just about surviving. We departed a darkened Peel, again recognising that there were so much more to do, than we had time for, but also slightly and pleasantly worn out and looking forward to dinner. After a Chinese, we played table top strategy games again, into the early hours.

Sunday was a late starter, and then, with that we travelled on the actual train service, all of us enjoying some mulled wine, as we travelled from Douglas to Santon, past Port Soderick.

Just south of Port Soderick, the line ran parallel with another railway, a miniature one, on private land, there were station and railway buildings as well as crossings and loops, indicating quite a serious set up, all on private land, away from prying eyes. I asked Emma, who said she would enquire, but that it was known as a private affair.

This was a Santa special, and at Santon as children queued to see Santa in his railway station grotto, while we went to the very nice carriage, which had a wonderful wooden bar and very nicely upholstered and turned chairs, where we warmed our innards, and then as we watched the engine run around, warm ourselves near the brazier. It did indeed feel like a different world, light years away from the hurry and rush of a London always on the move, and I am envious of my friends, living in this iron road idyll.

*Railways operating.*

Manx Electric Railway Douglas to Ramsey via Laxey

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### James and Simone Bacon together on the train.

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Isle of Man Steam Railway Douglas to Port Erin (the South Line)  
IMR  
Douglas Bay Horse Tram  
Groundle Glen Railway  
Laxey Mines Railway

*Railways no longer operating.*

Isle of Man Railway from Douglas to Peel (The Peel Line)  
Manx Northern Railway from Ramsey to St John's (The Northern Line)  
Foxdale Branch (Foxdale Line)  
Douglas Head Marine Drive and Electric Tramway

*Funiculars no longer in operation.*

The Falcon Cliff Hotel Lift  
Douglas Head Cliff Railway  
Laxey – Browside Tramway  
Port Soderick Cliff Railway

*Miniature railways.*

Orchid Line, Manx Steam and Model engineering club, run a track in the Curragh's wildlife park, near Ballaugh, south of Jurby

### ***TV Interviews Phunny Phormer Worldcon Chair***

A local New Orleans TV news reporter interviewed former Worldcon chair John Guidry for a January 6 feature about the Phunny Phorthy Phellows street car ride that kicks off the annual Mardi Gras carnival season. John was attired as a chef and wore a yellow Lone Ranger



**John Guidry**, center, helps kick off the Mardi Gras season aboard the Phunny Phorthy Phellows Trolley Ride.

mask.

While riding the St. Charles street car the Phellows sipped champagne, ate King Cake, and let fly the first beads of the Mardi Gras season. They turned back at Canal, then got off at the Willow Street Car Barn to attend the Coronation Ball for their newest Queen and Boss Phellow.

### ***Do Artists Always Lose Fan Funds?***

When Frank Wu came out on the losing end of the latest TAFF race a disgruntled friend of mine declared his surprise because Frank is such a popular fan. But he consoled Frank with a seductive conspiracy theory – that no artist has ever run for TAFF or DUFF and won.

Tremendous numbers of fanartists *have* lost TAFF. Terry Jeeves did it three times (1955, 1971, 1977). Other artists who have lost include Bjo (1959), Eddie Jones (1962), Bill Rotsler (1970), Jim Barker (1980), Grant Canfield (1983), Taral Wayne (1983), D. West (1984), Luke McGuff (1989), Joe Wesson (1995), and Frank Wu (2009).

Frank Dietz (1973) may also belong on the list. His fanzine credits include *Luna Monthly* and I believe he did quite a bit of art for it, but I had trouble testing my recollection with online research because he shares a name with a well-known Disney artist.

Yet a look at TAFF history reveals the perhaps surprising fact that the list of winning fanartists is almost as long as the list of losers.

Lee Hoffman won TAFF in 1956, followed by ATom (1964), Steve Stiles (1968), Eddie Jones (1969, winning on his second attempt), Stu Shiffman (1981), Jeanne Gomoll (1987), Dan Steffan (1995), Ulrika O'Brien (1998) and Sue Mason (2000).

The Down Under Fan Fund has also been kind to fanartists: Bill Rotsler (1977), Ken Fletcher (1979; he succeeded to the trip when I had to withdraw, having just been hired by the government), and the trio of Australian artists Nick Stathopoulos, Lewis Morley, Marilyn Pride (1986).

Fanartists can't win fan funds? The real explanation may be that the winning fanartists are not remembered as they deserve, even by other fanartists. Several did fine trip reports.

### ***Clark's Other Identity***

Eric McCormack of *Will & Grace* fame played Christian Karl Gerhartsreiter in *Who Is Clark Rockefeller?*, a movie aired March 13 on Lifetime. Gerhartsreiter once masqueraded as a Rockefeller scion and presently is serving time in a Massachusetts prison for kidnapping his daughter. He remains a "person of interest" in the 1985 disappearance of two LASFS members John and Linda Sohus.

The online movie trailer includes the briefest flash of human bones lying in the ground, the only specific hint I found in any of the promotional material that the Sohus disappearance is part of the story.

The imposter's name surprisingly also figured into a New York *Times*' profile of the late J.D. Salinger. An Internet guide to finding Salinger's home in Cornish directed tourists to look for a red, painted bus stop at the bottom of a local hill. The structure belonged to a neighbor who built it for his child. After the child outgrew it the neighbor sold it to another local, Gerhartsreiter, then known as Clark Rockefeller. Thereafter tourists would turn into Gerhartsreiter's driveway, demanding to meet J. D. Salinger.

# The Fanivore

Marie Rengstorff

*File 770* is so professional that I feel I should apologize for my rushed answers. Worse than the act of rushing my responses is the reason why -- I need to write fiction and snorkel every day. The more I write letters, the less I write fiction. If I can see enough in the ocean to avoid crashing into a rock, I snorkel. Today the surface shows questionable conditions. I'm walking across the street anyway.

Yesterday was an eel day. The moray and dragon eels were getting fat on a classic Winter Solstice Feast. Visibility was pathetic. The eels were hiding in cracks with their heads out, catching a bouquet of passing fish that could not see well in the muck. I was the only human out swimming with the eels. The lifeguards were using their megaphones to warn parents to hold onto their small children.

The record waves, the big ones, some 50 feet, were on the north shore. I live on the SSW shore of Maui. Happy Winter Solstice. I hope you enjoy a wonderful winter feast like the eels.

[[Ook ook!]]

On the topic, Charlie Brown "died peacefully in his sleep...on his way home from Readercon." He was too young, but the concept really appeals to me. That may sound crass to the young readers, but those who watch even one friend or family member die a long, painful death will understand. I would love to go do something interesting, take a nap in the car (or whatever the means of getting home is) and not have to roll my luggage in at the end of the trip. My family tends to die in their sleep at the age of 95+/- four years, but in their beds. They die of sleep apnea.

Some years ago my doctor, age 45, offered to treat me for inherited sleep apnea. I told him, if he were still in business, I would let him treat me when I reached 92. That doctor died before he was 50. Apparently he died because of his fear of getting fat and dying from complications of that disorder. I refused his help on that problem as well. His obsessive attitude made me nervous.

According to the gossip, he did not eat any fat for months.

Any Australian child (because of a popular children's story of being lost in the wilderness) and any cultural anthropologist (because we need to know how to eat in the wild while on a research trip) can tell you, a human cannot live for more than three months without eating fat. Nuts will do.



(Take that last sentence as you see fit.)

One of my favorite foods is apple-wedges smeared with peanut butter. Macadamia nut butter is even better, but costs about \$20 an apple.

[[Apples and peanut butter -- I love 'em too. I got reintroduced once Sierra grew enough teeth to enjoy them herself.]]

THE LAW: I don't know the answer to the Constitutional Amendment question in 770. I do, however, have another bit of old law that I learned the hard way.

When I was in Africa (1971-3) I discovered a massive treasury of British books I had never heard of by authors such as Wilbur Smith and T. Ranger. I read every one of those books I could get my hands on, but there was too much to be learned. These books were about WWI, WWII, England, the Allies, Africa under colonialism. By the time I was ready to leave Africa, I knew I needed copies of the piles of still unread books.

I brought up the concept of "going home" to the U.S. and ordering a bunch of these British publications from a favorite used bookstore. The bookstore in Lusaka, Zambia had a wonderful collection for, typically, 10 cents each. The storeowner informed me he would not be able to sell "that kind of book" to me after I returned to the U.S. He explained, "The United States does not allow the shipping of books into your country when

those books criticize U.S. political policy, especially international political policy."

I know I stood, astonished, frozen, with my mouth open. I actually did. Suddenly, all the stuff I learned about "the land of the free" sounded crazy. At that moment, the United States sounded idiotic. I was thinking things like, "He must be wrong," and "We made a mistake when we fought the war of independence from Britain." I was thinking even worse things about our involvement in the battle still raging at that moment in Vietnam.

That U.S. law was changed a few years after I returned home from Africa, but it left a lasting impression on me. We still have other crazy laws. I hope you can think of at least one of them that needs a cleanup.

On my way home I left a lasting impression on the international luggage inspectors at the airport in California. Before leaving Africa, I purchased a Kikuyu basket, a large one, and filled it with the books I wanted. We were allowed to carry those evil books into the U.S., just not allowed to have them shipped to us.

The inspectors at the airport were sure I had broken some law. The books were all used, so it was not an issue of value and import taxes. After they checked the working of the "banned book law," they decided I was importing something else that really was illegal and using the banned author law as a cover.

My basket made no sense to them. No one brought 50 pounds of cheap, ratty, used books into the U.S.

They opened every book, I assume looking for the hollowed-out ones filled with interesting other "stuff." They found only lovely, banned books about African and political history.

Over the decades, after reading each book a few times each, I gave them all away. I have none of them left, but they created a lava flow of informed college students.

Back to Maui. I can go snorkel now. The lifeguards are on their chairs and the whales are jumping.

I'm taking 770 to the beach. I am at the top of page 46 after skipping through the convention reports. I will go back and read those convention reports. I will end this year without attending a single convention, although I attended two very informative meetings of the Professional Writers of Prescott (AZ).

Writers in that area, give it a try. Not all meetings will be of interest because they cover the whole range of writing and publishing topics. I avoid poetry and self-publishing

issues. Watch their Home Page for what topics excite you. Google Professional Writers of Prescott. Visitors welcome.

Members are from all over AZ, and even include a few like me from afar with a second home in AZ. My AZ home, by dumb luck and the cheap price of housing in the area, is in the City of Prescott -- a really nice town. Even cheaper houses (3 bed, 2 bath, \$100,000) can be found in nearby Prescott Valley, 20 minute drive from meetings (summer 82 degrees, winter average one snow fall every other year.)

P.S. I still need to read about the conventions. Instead of reading 770, I watched the whales jump. The water was murky, but I got to swim with 2 turtles. They were sleeping on the bottom. One got up and swam beside me back to some coral caves. He was a big male. I often wonder about those guys and their attraction to human females.

*[[Thanks for your latest letter -- I always love to get them. I'm not sure if this zine ever will compete with jumping whales. Maybe that's the reason most of my LoCs come from landlocked states?]]*

### Brad Foster

Issue #157 was waiting in the mailbox a couple of days ago, and took me all that time to devour what I think might be the thickest issue in the last several years!

Great news that Dan Steffan was awarded the Rotsler this year. Much, much deserved. He's not only a fabulous artist, but one of the best designers to lend his eye to fanzines.

Also appreciated your comments to Mike Glicksohn in the loc column regarding the thinking behind the award. I still think Steve Fox more than deserves the award, but going by your comments, since he is no longer actively around, probably not really "eligible." Hey, maybe you could add a "Hall of Fame" to the award. Once a year, along with the living and producing winner, you guys could pick a fan artist from the past that you feel is worth recognition as well. Not everyone left behind a couple of filing cabinets full of art to use like Bill did, and some fine work (again, like that of my personal fave Steve), is really unknown to many folks now. Just a thought.

Thanks for recognizing the passing of Don Punchatz here. I'd first met Don years ago when I had the nerve out of school to approach his fantastic Sketchpad Studio operation to see if I could get a job. Up until then I had received nothing but empty praise for my art, and no jobs. Don didn't offer me a job either, but he did give me the first honest appraisal of my meager talents, and directed me on the right path to what turned out, amazingly enough, to a full time art

career. The list of artists of all levels who had such favorable contacts with Don is huge, he touched a lot of folks both through his art, and through his interest in others. Need more people like him.

Wow, Taral's 28-page convention report was amazing for the depth, and interesting for his honesty in expressing his feelings, both positive and negative, about the whole experience. (And cool to get one of those beautiful membership badges tipped in to the issue. Let an online zine try to compete with THAT kind of extra service!) Also loved getting the behind-the-scenes shots of his fannish apartment being put up. I'd seen a few pictures online, but as Taral himself noted, the great nature of the pictures means a photo of the photo looks like the real thing. Can get the real feeling for this display in the photos here.

WE'VE SOLVED ALL  
THE PROBLEMS OF  
DRINKING FROM A  
FIRE HOSE EXCEPT  
KIDNEY FAILURE!



### Robert Silverberg

I take umbrage at your omitting Me from your list of winners of the Best Fan Writer Hugo who have also sold pro fiction. May I remind you that I was the (totally undeserved) winner of the 1950 Retro-Hugo in that category, beating out such people as Willis and Tucker? Of course I would not have won the award if I hadn't had a few stories published professionally along the way. But I did get the Hugo.

*[[If you want to be in, you're IN! And after inspecting the list of Retro-Hugo winning fanwriters I find adding all of you doesn't change the answer to my trivia question. We can all be happy!]]*

And I'm surprised at Taral's surprise, in his splendid worldcon report, that pros are so hard to find at conventions after dark. Surely

Taral has been around long enough to know that the pros have a social group of their own, even as fans do, and actually go out to dinner together in the evenings in little clumps of six or eight or ten, and then go off to their Dirty Pro parties, where publishers ply them with cut-rate booze. And some writers, like this one, are getting up there in age and tend to toddle off to bed toward eleven or twelve at night, something that I certainly didn't do forty years ago.

Matter of fact, back then I would often drop in at fan parties -- I would always hit the Cincinnati group's party, and the DC crowd's, and Pittsburgh's, to mention some that come to mind. But conventions were smaller then, the hallways were less boisterous, and the age gulf between the fans and the pros wasn't as wide as it has become in recent years. I don't feel comfortable nowadays in a huge party of largely unfamiliar fans half my age or less, and I don't think they feel very comfortable having me around, either. So I go out to dinner with George Martin or Joe Haldeman or Nancy Kress or some of the other pros Taral didn't see, and then I go to the Tor party or the Asimov's party or whatever is going on that night, and then I go...off...to...sleep...

### Andre Lieven

Greetings. In Taral's "To Walk The Moon" piece there are a couple of errors of fact regarding the Montreal Olympics. The sidebar on page 21 contains the comment about the "1967 Olympic Stadium." The actual Montreal Olympics were held in 1976. The stadium did not exist, even on paper, in 1967. Montreal did hold Expo 67 in 1967, as a part of celebrations of Canada's centennial year.

Also, that sidebar makes the claim that the architect of the Stadium was German. This would come as a surprise to the actual architect, Roger Taillbert, who still is 100% French.

Taral also comments on the SFnalism of the stadium, and compares it to some gear in Thunderbirds, a very apt comparison. But, he might not know that the Montreal Olympic Stadium appeared in the late 70s Buck Rogers TV series as a spaceship, in the two part episode "The Flight Of The War Witch." Granted, it was upside down, and missing the tower (which was not yet installed at the time in the real stadium.)

As a former Montrealer, I notice such things...

Also on page 30, Taral wrote: "There had been no man-made objects in space in 1958 except the two Russian satellites. Vanguard had not yet been successfully launched."

Well, I have a personal relationship with the satellite Vanguard 1, as it was launched 4

days before I was, but I have always outweighed it.

It went up on March 17, 1958, and it weighs 1.47 kg.

But, it wasn't the first US satellite or the first satellite of 1958. Explorer 1 was the first US sat, and it was launched on January 31, 1958.

The big Soviet Sputnik 3 went up on May, 15 1958. This was the spacecraft originally intended to be the USSR's IGY satellite, with Sputnik's 1 & 2 being last minute lash-ups.

And, 1958 saw the first spacecraft to fall from orbit, as Sputnik 1 re-entered on January 4, 1958. Sputnik 2 came down on April 14, but, by then, there were two US satellites up.

Lots more went up that year, too. Both into Earth orbit, as well as the first attempts to fire at the Moon.

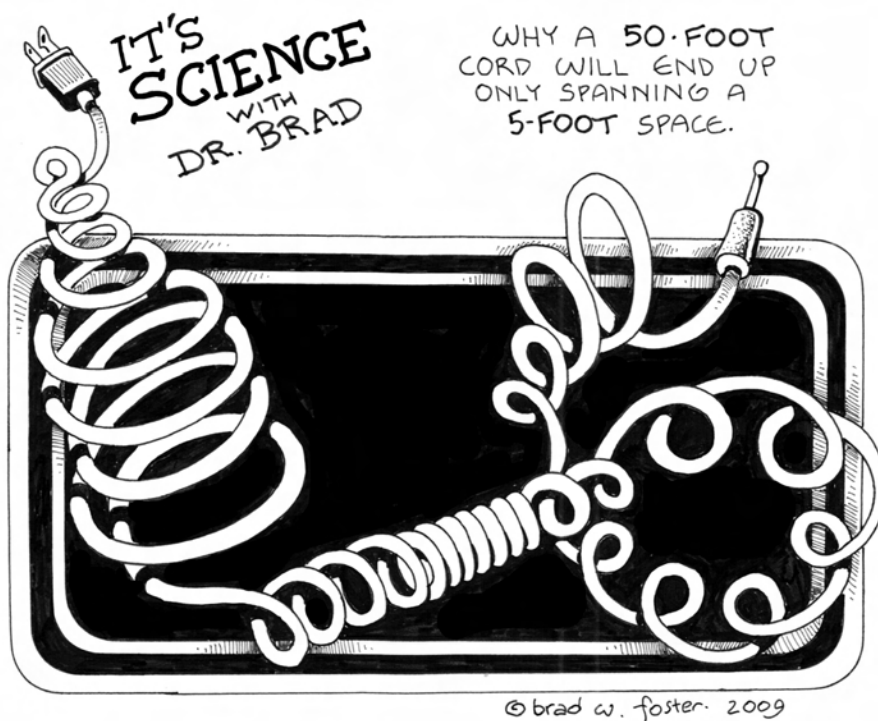
What can I say, space history is a passion of mine...

**David Axler**

I very much enjoyed Taral's lengthy Worldcon report, but was struck by one bit of irony. In his discussion of the "...equalitarian relationship between fans and pros," he fails to note one key distinction: In general, pros -- even those who came from fandom -- generally don't write con or trip reports. A small number may blog about their con experiences, but they certainly don't go on at this length. And the general notion that the recipient of an honor such as GoH (or TAFF/DUFF/GUFF) ought to do so as a matter of course (even if that expectation isn't always coincident with reality) doesn't seem to exist among pros, regardless of their roots.

**Darrell Schweitzer**

To answer Taral's question on page 31 about which pros were fans, we have to leave aside the whole issue of someone being both, as in the examples of Bob Shaw, Bob Tucker, and Bob Bloch. (That's it -- the way you get to be a fan and a pro at the same time is to be named Bob. . . .) The story goes -- I think I heard him tell this once at a convention -- that sometime in the late '30s Forry Ackerman was in a used-magazine store in Los Angeles and overheard this other fellow ask the proprietor for the issues of *Amazing* containing "The Skylark of Space." Forry recognized a kindred spirit and immediately recruited him into LASFS. The newcomer's name was Robert A. Heinlein, who was indeed a member of LASFS in the late '30s and early '40s. As this seems to have happened before Heinlein's first story appeared in *Astounding*,



yes, Heinlein was a fan first. Roger Zelazny certainly engaged in fannish activities. He was in the N3F when I was, about 1969. Of course he was a famous pro by then. But he contributed stories, poems, and occasional essays to fanzines. I am not sure if this predates his first pro sales.

I can add to Taral's comments about the closing of the US/Canadian border to commerce that one of the most prominent American bookdealers told me that what prevented him from going to Anticipation was no so much the paperwork and the fees, which can be overcome if you are determined enough, but a new regulation which requires anything brought into Canada for sale to be brought in a *commercial vehicle*. Unless the huckster just happens to own a truck classified as a commercial vehicle, it's now impossible to get into Canada. There are also numerous censorship problems for some publications. As comic-book dealers or publishers can tell you, an adult comic book which might be seized at the border as obscene will be okay if *printed* in Canada. But it's more than a censorship issue. One of the publishers (an American) in the huckster room at the World Fantasy Con in Calgary in 2008 told me he managed to get his (not very controversial) books into Canada by having some of his titles printed there. He then had them shipped to the hotel, and picked them up there. This is simple protectionism, great for Canadian printers. I also suspect that to some degree the Canadians are afraid of being culturally overwhelmed by the Americans and are trying to

keep foreign publications and goods out.

The American rules are just as silly. I met a Canadian bookdealer at NECon (Northeast Regional Fantasy Con, in Bristol RI) a few years back who told me that there was *no way* for him to get his books into the US and sell them legally because it was a *labor* issue. That is, regulations should require him to hire an American to do the selling. Otherwise he is a wicked foreigner taking a job away from an American. How did he get his books to NECon? The answer is in one word: smuggling. I commended him for emulating this venerable Yankee tradition, and of course I bought a book from him. In the real world, I gather, there already is a substantial amount of smuggling at the border, mostly into Canada, but more DVDs and videotapes than books.

It seems to be the Americans who are insisting on passports for even the most casual border crossings. You can walk into Canada without showing a passport, but you can't get back into the US without one. There was a time when attendees at Eeriecon in Niagara Falls NY would casually step over into Canada, either for a better view of the Falls or because the restaurants were better over there. Not anymore. This may work out as protectionism on the part of the Americans. The American side used to be a ghost town, filled with empty storefronts and even a shopping mall that was built but never occupied. Now it is beginning to come to life, while the Canadian side is suffering.

## Jerry Kaufman

Trying to write about What Worldcon Means (To Me) seems like a big job. I've been to 16 or 17 of them over the years. My first was 1966, when I was 17, in Cleveland. That's only a fraction of the total since 1966, but I have some sense of how they've changed over the years.

Obviously, they've grown, but not because the number of people who love reading fantastic fiction and want to get together to discuss and celebrate it has grown. As science fiction and fantasy trappings have taken over all the entertainment media - as the media themselves have changed and added new dimensions - the people who respond more to music, film, television, handicrafts, games and so forth have discovered the science fictions conventions as a way to gather.

So I think the Worldcon and other conventions have grown by adding on the other interests. Have a convention primarily devoted to reading and the people for whom this is not the primary draw will drop away and you'll have Readercon or Potlatch.

Lou Anders has said that writers should go to Dragoncon instead of Worldcon if the two conflict because those people at Dragoncon read. I don't doubt that if you start with a 30,000 person con, you'll find a significant portion who also read books. But is that their main reason for attending? I've never been, so this is pure speculation on my part, but I would expect not. They are drawn to the mass media aspects, which is why there is such a mass of them.

In Taral's report on his experiences at Anticipation, he talks about the whole fan and pro relationship. One of our major cultural myths about fandom is the parity between fan and pro. (I'm using "myth" in the sense of a sacred story we tell ourselves about our culture and history, and not in the sense of a mistaken belief.) This is based on the common interest we share as readers and lovers of sf, and on our sense that many pros were fans first, and further on our sense that fans could become pros.

There's truth to a degree in all these assumptions, although these days I think a lot fewer pros come out of fandom. Most of the newer pros I know have come from the writing workshops and the semi-pro magazines, but in the 1940s through the 1970s quite a few writers were fans first. (In the 1970s, in



my circle of New York friends, many became not writers but editors: Ginjer Buchanan, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, John Douglas, Jim Frenkel.) Of the people that Taral speculates about, I can say that Greg Bear was a fan first. Larry Niven may have been - but you would know for sure, Mike. Taral doesn't mention Bob Silverberg or Greg Benford, both definitely fans.

But Taral's point is still well taken, that there is a growing gap between fan and pro at cons. The writing workshops like Clarion West tell their writing students that cons are there for professional advancement: meeting editors on a more informal basis, networking, pressing the flesh of impressionable readers. They all want to be on a panel so they can place that new book in front of them.

In part this is a reasonable approach for someone new to fan conventions, someone with no prior interest in attending such events. But it misses the point of conventions, which is for me at least that we put these things on for our tribal gatherings. We expect that others of our tribe, whether they publish fanzines, write stories, draw rocketships, or whatever, will come to see the other far-flung members of the tribe. A tribe can have many clans but they all fit together. And you can join the tribe (though there's a difference of opinion about how easy this is).

I've noted that it appears (at least superficially) that the gap between fan and pro is

smaller in British fandom, and easier to pass through. This is in part because the country and population is smaller, I think, but even there I sense the gap is growing.

That's all kind of random. But it's all as close as I can get to what I think as I can manage for the moment. Possibly a more coherent and reasoned article will grow out of this some day.

I should tell Taral that I was sorry to miss Anticipation, but Suzle and I anticipated household expenses early this year and decided not to spend even Canadian dollars on the trip. (The household stuff multiplied beyond what we expected, so it's a good thing we stayed home.) Of course, now we're planning an even more expensive trip to England for 2010.

Taral surprised me by referring to Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog as "some gim-crack amateur production on a blog." Did no one clue him into the professional credits of the thing? But I admit I hadn't seen it myself when I read Taral's dismissal.

I've since watched one portion, and thus decided that I must get the DVD so Suzle and I can watch the entire thing in the comfort of our living room, with extras. I'm still not sure, though, how it qualified (as a web-based production) for its Emmy.

Yeah, there's still more, from Taral, that I could comment on, like the over-programming of conventions and the tiny - or entirely nonexistent - audiences for fan-nish topics like con running, fanzines, or fan funds. I saw the exact same thing at Orycon in Portland, Oregon, this year. They saved the Fan Guest of Honor from embarrassment only by not having a Fan Guest of Honor.

Well, I've ridden enough hobby horse for one morning, and I'm galloping off into the sunrise now.

## Joseph T Major

**LASFS at 75:** The melancholy thing is to know that the people are gone. Will Roy Test be around for much longer? Why hasn't he been a WorldCon Fan Guest of Honor?

*[[Regrettably Roy Test just passed away. While he deserved more attention from the LASFS than he got over the years, he wouldn't have been on the radar of Worldcon committees because he wasn't a national fan or a major fanzine fan. He's not even mentioned in All Our Yesterdays. Only his mother is,*



*precisely because her minutes were published.]]*

**Joe Haldeman:** The SFFWA has a way with get-well awards. Congratulations to the new Grandmaster.

**Does The Mouse Own Stu Hellinger?:** I think I saw this in an Elastic Man comic, where the bad guy du issue had patented the wheel, and was demanding royalty payments out the wazoo. So Elastic Man patented fire and then started hitting him up for payments. No one mentioned "prior art."

**Not J. R. R. Bond:** Cryptology often demands the knowledge of other languages. Herbert O. Yardley described in *The American Black Chamber* the struggle he had to go through to get people literate in Japanese in order to crack Japanese codes. And the Soviet codes had groups for spelling out words for which there isn't an assigned code group, as most codes do. There was one for "THE", which indicated that they were going to quote a lot of English text. (And one VENONA message said that the wife of Agent LIBERAL had a first name that they used three groups to send. "E - THE - L", it turned out to be.)

**Westercon Notebook:** I wonder if Robert Louis Stevenson knew that the first father-in-law of James II was named Edward Hyde? (He is more commonly known by his title, Earl of Clarendon, but . . . The current Earl of Clarendon is a descendant of his, but through a daughter of the last Hyde earl.)

**To Walk the Moon:** We saw the spiders, all the way over at the Travelodge. So it must have been Spider Week/semaine de l'araignée up there.

Torcon 3 may have been catastrophic (the time I ran into Darrell Schweitzer going to the convention center for a panel while I was going to the Royal York to see him on that panel was fortuitous) but it did have one noteworthy event: The Great Donut Taste-Off. Krispy-Kreme was moving into Canada, just as Tim Hortons was moving into the States. (There is a Tim Hortons in front of the hotel we stay at during the Sherlock Holmes/Arthur Conan Doyle Symposium in Dayton.) So they sponsored a taste-off. And the score was . . . a tie! Eight voted for Krispy-Kreme as better, eight for Tim Hortons as better, and one for Al Gore.

At least I had the pleasure of meeting Taral at WorldCon. And Marc Schirmmeister, too.

**Sowing Dragon's Teeth:** I think we are seeing a transition to "Fanning Alone." The fan (not Fan) is a consumer of fannish product, not a participant. Dragon\*Con draws from the media community. Yet, as reported on a previous page of this, once upon a time the media community supported 500-page zines with a print run of over 1000. They shifted from participants to consumers, they

too were fanning alone.

## Lloyd Penney

I'm still resting up from a strenuous Christmas, with all the usual things...too much food, lots of presents, not enough exercise, all the right things to make us feel guilty enough to do better in the New Year, for a few days, anyway. I've decided that in between the excesses of Christmas and the further excesses of New Year's, I'd get right back on my computer and hack out a loc on *File 770 157*.

Brianna Wu sure draws the great covers, doesn't she? Always action-packed and pretty, a winning combination for me.

Congratulations to LASFS on 75 years of fanning. Many fannish organizations are lucky to last a few years these days, so to care enough to keep this organization not just alive, but thriving for 75 years is an achievement for all who have cared enough to give time, effort and money to the health of the club. I would like very much to see that 75th Anniversary Memory Book. Once all members have a copy, would extra copies be available for sale, for club fundraising? LASFS's story is one that others should read.

The Heinlein Award that Joe Haldeman and John Varley won may be the same and/or different as the Heinlein Award given to space advocates each year. I believe that the two awards come out of the same fund. My own limited attendance of space conferences showed me how few space advocates were aware of RAH's science fiction achievements. It's almost like one group ignores the other, and it may even sound like there were two Heinleins with the same name.

Medical updates...Joe's back in the hospital, I hope he didn't spend Christmas there, and Mike Glicksohn's had some cancerous results. Do we ever catch a break, or is the modern fannish equivalent, of "Well, you think YOU had it bad..." Get well, everyone!

Tadao Tomomatsu may have announced his gafiation, but he is still busy on Facebook with the odd general announcement. Think this is more a fafiation?

*[[Maybe it's a targeted gafiation? And we just haven't discerned the target yet?]]*

I can only imagine Guy Lillian's reaction when he read this news item, plus the insert that came with this issue. He has said loudly that if he's going to not win the Best Fanzine Hugo, he'd like Challenger to lose to a fanzine. If blogs and websites can qualify, it's quite possible they will use their subscribers to get on the ballot. It may an indication of how old our fanzine interest is, but could it be possible that we'd be crowded out of the Best Fanzine category?

*[[We'll know soon.]]*

John Hertz' report on Ray Bradbury's birthday party mentions that Jan Bender had been daunted from showing her art work at the Montreal Worldcon by the prospect of Customs problems. And yet, the Montreal Worldcon has been blamed for a poor dealers' room and art show. If the dealers and artists would have discovered what problems there might be instead of assuming there's be problems they couldn't surmount, both dealers and art show would have been better with more selection, and very possibly increased sales.

This goes directly into Taral's report...I have to agree with him re Torcon, but then, I was privy to all the hard work that went into the bid, and about six months afterwards. That's when they got rid of me because the chairman of the BoD didn't like either of us. The committee, unfortunately, did a grand job of ignoring all offers of help and contributions, and they did everything themselves without benefit of outside help, and it showed. I wanted to be a part of my local Worldcon, and I was completely shut out by relative strangers to Toronto fandom. I still appreciate the fact that the L.A in 2006 committee took us on as Canadian agents, and they treated us far better than the Torcon 3 committee ever did.

I have never flown Porter Air, but it is the only local airline that doesn't fly out of Pearson International, but what is now known as Toronto Billy Bishop Island Airport, I believe... I have been inside a Q400, and I envy Taral's trip. I did very much enjoy being able to take part in awarding the Hugos...it was indeed something I've wanted to do, and it was a lot of fun to work with Diane Lacey and crew in helping it come about. I can't deny that. However, a Jos. Louis won't kill you. Having one for dessert after a plate of poutine will. (Just thinking about that is making my arteries harden.)

I also admit that I had a good time with the fanzine lounge, so much, that I didn't get to see a lot of the convention itself, but that was okay. We got to the Aurora banquet, I took part in a voice play panel, and we gave Cheryl Morgan her Hugo. In fact, I think that might be me third from the left in that dark photo on page 36. In the long run, an excellent time was had by many, and I honestly thought that after Torcon 3, we'd never see another Canadian Worldcon again. I am pleased to be wrong, and hope I may be wrong again in a future year. Eastern Canada has had it, and Western Canada sounds pretty good to me...

My own experience when it comes to expanding the number of interests in a convention is that by trying to satisfy all fans, you wind up satisfying none. Each interest will feel that by giving in to others, you are failing to cater to their own. I have also found that

most people being basically lazy, some groups would rather take over an existing con than start their own, or have others cater to them. I have heard of cons taken over by specialty groups once invited to take part by an unsuspecting committee. I know of other cons that are vigilant against those specialty groups coming in and taking over...that has been their stated intent. They won't or can't start their own con. Literary SF cons are in danger not only because of reduced sales and reduced literacy, but because of predation from others. Perhaps litcons are careful because we fear being overrun by the barbarians at the gate.

There are so many reasons why Worldcons are down in size, and you've listed most of them. Thank you for being very knowledgeable about the industry here. I attended the last few Book Expo Canada shows, as a worker and as a reader, and over those three years, saw the trade show area shrink about 40% in size. Many Canadian publishers suffer from reduced sales, but also from increased competition from American publishers, so many of them have gone out of business. I recall there was an attempt to replace Book Expo Canada, but not even that came about. Reed Exhibitions is a business, and will run only the shows that work.

I know the origin of the name, but baseball notwithstanding, if you're going to have the word World in your name, you should expect the world to want to participate, unless you're simply going to build a brick wall along both borders, just to keep us northern wetbacks from crossing the border. (There are still too many fans convinced that they needed a passport to come to Canada. They needed a passport to get back home, but of course, that was Anticipation's fault. Huh?) The conditions for crossing the border change regularly, and those changes come from both government, but Canadian policy is heavily influenced by American policy, and that changes with ever incident, major or minor. The two incidents at Detroit International with planes coming in from Amsterdam show that the world can still be dangerous, and those who fly will now have to reduce their carry-on luggage, be patted down suspect-style. We will have to endure much to go to Worldcons in the future, but we will go.

Alex von Thorn certainly knows, as do I, that media conventions build little in the way of community, and for those of us who were loners in our youth, having some community to bind us together, even loosely, is valuable to us. Part of that community is in the running of the Worldcon itself, which we would lose if the Worldcon became Dragon\*con-sized. We seem to be at the size the market will allow, and I think that's fine.

Allowing those other interests in would

push written SF to the side or out entirely, much like I detailed a couple of paragraphs ago, and we'd lose our own convention. Should we keep to ourselves and support this particular interest, we will be the size we need to be...if the convention goes away altogether because of a lack of interest or bidders, perhaps we should say c'est la vie, such as it should be. We could fight to keep our annual big convention, the way many special interests do, but if people can't go or can't afford the expense... Increased costs of travel, accommodation, food, etc., may also keep attendance down to those fortunate few who will be able to afford it in the future. The average Worldcon attendee is also aging, and at some point, a lot of us may be unwilling or unable to travel. This discussion will continue as long as there are fans left to care about it. Will there be a Worldcon in 2025? Who will the committee be, and what will their average age be? We may not be as good as foretelling the future as we'd like to be, but that's never stopped us before.

I can judge a size of the loc it generates. Three pages should tell you something. Many thanks, Mike, and while I wait for the next issue, I will keep checking the very informative website. We'll see you then.

*[[It's a privilege to receive such a thoughtful loc, Lloyd!]]*

### M. Lee Rogers

Mike, you have outdone yourself this time. Of course, a 30-page con report will up the pagecount somewhat. Fortunately, that gives us readers some meat to chew on.

Who would have thought that Bo Derek would be a fan of Bradbury? One wonders if she keeps up with the SF field in general or is just a Bradbury fan. It's hard to tell much from the photo, but she does appear to have aged well. (Come on now--we know when *10* came out.)

On Hertz's Westercon report: does he furnish the pullouts or do you put them in? They always add just the right touch of whimsy and seriousness to the report, almost like a haiku. In fact, John's writing style tends to suggest a r-e-a-l-l-y long haiku. If memory serves, Mr. Hertz is interested in Japanese culture. Perhaps that is why his reports are so distinctive and enjoyable.

*[[The callout quotes are always selected by John to accent the stories in his conreport.]]*

I do not do much on-line fanac--mostly reading the mailing list that descended from the former apa Myriad. So this was the first to hear about Mr. Resnick's modest proposals. No, I most definitely do not want to see the Worldcon end up like Dragoncon with 30-40,000 attendees. I specifically avoid

megacons because they would be way too much hassle.

A good traditional SF convention is a way to meet people with similar interests in the fantastic. Most of the time, these people are very much worth talking to about other subjects as well. It is not a chance to stand in line three hours and pay money to shake hands with a C- or D-list celebrity who happened to get a gig in an SF movie once upon a time. Feh. I will always be for the traditional SF convention that focuses on the literature. If Mr. Resnick prefers to go to Dragoncon, he is perfectly free to do so. To revive an old advertising slogan, "Delta is ready when you are."

The larger question is, will science fiction and/or science fiction fandom survive.

SF as a genre of literature will probably track along with whatever happens to written literature in general. I do not keep up with the field much these days, mostly because at some point in the past it looked like the authors had stopped writing SF and mostly concentrated on sword-and-sorcery style fantasy. With any luck, there is some decent SF being written other than the military SF subgenre that Toni Weisskopf manages.

SF fandom is another issue. Again, my current experience is very limited. But from that limited contact, it appears that fandom is graying and will die out in 10-20 years as we pass off this mortal coil. There are a few young'uns coming along, but not many. If they are doing anything, they might be attending the anime-comics-media conventions.

The worst thing that ever happened to SF fandom was Star Wars. Star Trek started the process of putting SF in the mainstream, but Mr. Lucas finished the job. After his movie, there was nothing special about being a fan anymore. Any female could put her hair up like Princess Leia and nobody would freak out. Persecution tends to make membership in a group much more meaningful--ask the Christians who were fed to the lions in Roman times.

I had never thought about *Top Cat* as a remake of *Bilko*, but Joe Major is totally correct. Then again, much of Hanna-Barbera's output in the 50's and 60's ripped off popular culture. *The Flintstones* as the *Honeymooners*, the *Jetsons* as the *Flintstones* in the future, using a name like Yogi Bear--the shows were often funny but rarely original.

Mr. Docherty has taken a very sensible approach to the interpretation of Hugo rules. After a few basic interpretations, let the voters decide. If the awards are taken over by the unwashed Internet masses, so be it.

For much of fandom's history, it was a proud and lonely thing to be a fan. Now it's

just a lifestyle choice. Maybe it will once again become a proud and lonely thing before much longer.

### **Martin Morse Wooster**

Taral Wayne's Anticipation report was highly entertaining, and perhaps the best Worldcon report I've read since Cheryl Morgan's 70-page epic analysis of Torcon III. (That was the report, you recall, where Morgan maintained reader interest by tossing another member of the concom into an empty elevator shaft every 800 words.) I was pleased to learn that Taral wore a kimono-like garment on stage. At the time, I wondered WHY Taral decided to wear a bathrobe, or his jammies, or some sort of strange outfit for bedtime on stage. Knowing that it was actually a kimono-like garment makes me feel better...

I could well understand why publishers wouldn't go to Montreal. Getting stuff across the border is a major hassle, and I could see why publishers would want to stay in America. It will be interesting to see who goes to Reno. I like the Worldcon just the way it is--and fans should be respected for voting to hold the convention around the world. I would hate to see the Worldcon become a nine-ring circus for media fans. I don't think sf writers would benefit from such an arrangement. But then I'm just a fan, who goes to Worldcons to hang out with his fellow fen and explore cities I would otherwise never see.

As for Roger Ebert, he would have been an interesting guest. But I believe he has had major bouts of cancer which have left him able to write but not speak.

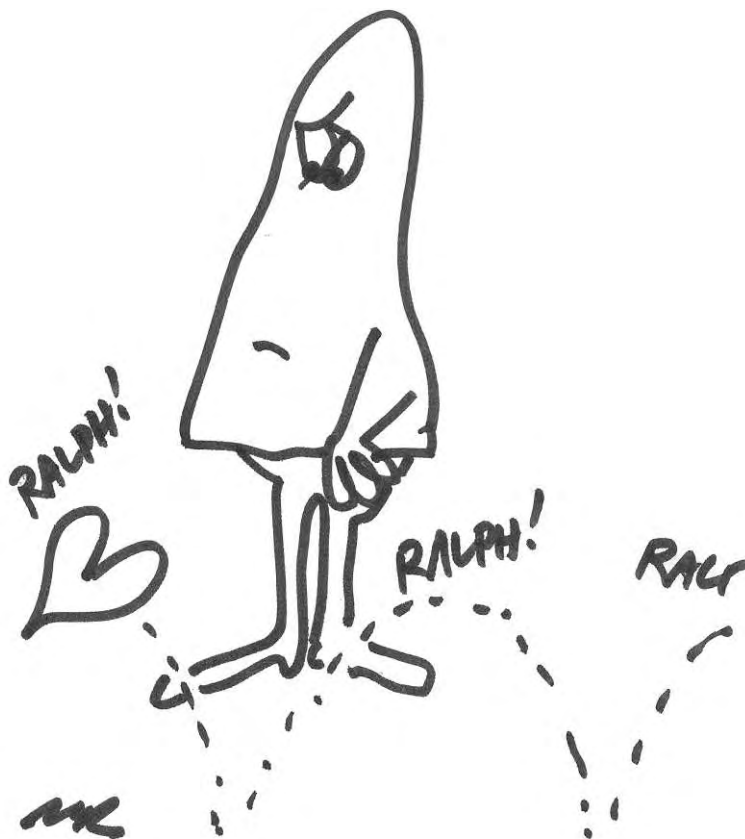
### **Chip Hitchcock**

Taral wonders what happened to his virtual apartment. I can't answer for the surfaces, but the supporting pipes went back to the stocks of NESFA and Arisia; I discovered when I started setting up for Boskone that some wag had marked several of them with yellow stickies saying "ceci n'est pas une appartement."

A few other points on his report:

- Some spiders put out silk light enough to carry them long distances on wind currents. I suspect that they get lifted quite high in the thermals of a large city.

- He appears confused about the funding for parties; these generally don't come out of the convention budget. (The one (indirect) exception I can think of is the discount that Worldcon presupporters get for funding bid expenses (e.g., parties) -- but that's a tiny fraction of the membership cost.)



- His claim to have "busted" the "myth" of pro presence at conventions just doesn't wash -- especially since he admits he doesn't know most pros by sight. I was gathering signatures on a get-well card for Davey and had no trouble finding many pros we'd known for years, and I saw many others who I recognized but didn't think we had the connections to ask. Since he says later that he doesn't attend any cons, I think he's talking through his hat. (cf also his "But what Worldcon doesn't have problems with the elevators of one sort or another?")

And a related comment on "Sowing Dragon's[sic] Teeth": the issue of location is not only who can put on the convention, but where they can find facilities. Worldcons are at best 3rd-tier conventions; they're not large enough *or* expensive enough to command instant interest. (re expense: I know \$200 for 4-5 days sounds like a lot to people traveling on their own nickel, but 10-20 years ago my wife's professional conference ran \$100+ per day, including ~2 working meals per day -- hotels *love* catered meals, cf the Sheraton Boston's demand for \$40/roomnight catering (on top of \$160 for rooms) that drove the Boston in 2001 bid to Orlando.) IIRC, Reno was bid because Portland didn't have the facilities and Seattle bidders and sites could not come to an agreement, and San Jose was a 2nd choice because San Francisco wasn't doable in 2002.

I'm not sure how much Worldcons have run into a problem with the *image* of being unfriendly to interests other than books, or whether fixing that image would make them large enough to have more leverage without making them too large to be runnable (not a trivial concern, given the long-time professional staffs of Dragon\*Con and Comic-Con. A regional example: Boskone grew (average) ~15% per year for well over a decade (~1975 to 1987) before being shut out of all the places that could hold

it due to the cumulative effects of its reputation as a great party convention. The reformed, focused Boskone has averaged a little under half the size of the more general-interest(\*) Arisia -- which is still (*contra* your descriptions of Dragon\*Con and Comic-Con) a convention that people go to because their friends go there and/or because they expect to meet similarly ?eccentric? people.

### **Sam Long**

It's been a looong time--thirty-odd years--since we last chatted either in person or by mail: I hope you remember me. I'm glad to see that you and *File 770* are still around and thriving.

I was "leafing", if that is what one says in the e-world, through recent entries to *File 770* at the website and I came across the Decem-

ber 31, 2009 entry "Crime and Punishment" in which the *Weekly World News* tabloid was mentioned. And that's what prompts me to LoC.

Back in the late '70s I read a novel by James Hogan, *Inherit the Stars*, in which modern astronauts find a 50,000-year-old human skeleton on the moon in a space suit not of modern earth manufacture. (The cover of the original paperback shows the discovery; see the Amazon.com entry for the book.) Not so very long after that, I saw at the local supermarket a copy of the *Weekly World News* with a headline something like "Corpse Found on Moon," with an obviously faked photo purporting to be of the body, and an article about it. With some embarrassment I bought a copy (I like to say at this point that I put a paper bag over my head so that I couldn't be identified and mocked as "the guy who bought a *WWN*," but I didn't, really), and sent it to Hogan with a note saying "How did you know?" I got back from him a nice letter thanking me and telling me that he'd got a good chuckle out of the article, which he had not been aware until I sent it to him. (He was living in Ireland at the time, if I remember correctly.)

On the subject of "How did you know", I wonder how, back about 1960, when he was writing *Stranger in a Strange Land*, did Heinlein know that, 20 years later, there would be an amiable, unintellectual Chief Executive in power whose wife consulted astrologers.

Another time, back in the '80s, I think it was, I was leafing through a mail-order catalog of kitchen equipment and saw a juicer which reminded me irresistibly of the tripod robotoid beings in Clarke's *Rendezvous with Rama*. I clipped out the illo and sent it to ACC with a note to that effect, and got back an amused thank-you note from him. You can see what I mean because the juicer in question is still available on line; just put "Alessi lemon squeezer" in your search engine. And a follow-up to that: I remember seeing in some consumer magazine -- could it have been *Consumer Reports*? -- a review of several different makes of citrus squeezers/juicers, including the Alessi one. The Alessi one scored near the top on strikingness of design, but at or near the bottom for practicality, ease of use, and money's-worth. It was better as a piece of sculpture than as a way to make orange juice.

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### Alexis Gilliland

Thank you for *File 770:157* which arrived on or about the first night of Chanukah. The Brianne Wu cover was nicely done, suggesting non-specific comic bookish influences, though that pair of chainsaws as the warhead

of the missile is a little strange, even in a cartoon. Or maybe not, given that the Acme logo could be on the other side. Taral's back cover looks as if an experiment with shading didn't quite come off, so that it is a little below his usual standard, though on page 20 his tipped-in badge for Anticipation is excellent. A minor quibble, my cartoon on page 4 is duplicated on page 53, almost but not quite into the next issue where no one would have said anything.

If you check out the WSFA website, you will see that at the first Friday meeting in December Lee Strong, the club president, resigned along with the treasurer and one of the three trustees. Without going into the fan-political dispute involved, from what Lee told me it sounds like WSFA is morphing from a social club into a con committee, whose sole reason for being is to put on the Capclave. Since committee reports tend to be boring, inflicting them on the club membership as a committee of the whole does not appear to be a good way to entice new members. Lee also said that this year's Capclave made \$48, after the hotel forgave several hundred in charges.

What else? We enjoyed *The Princess and the Frog* which had an excellent book with strong characterization and a lovely New Orleans setting, circa 1920.

[[We'll see that eventually. Just now we're watching the DVD of *UP* now again, we like it so much. Even made it the theme of Sierra's 8th birthday party.]]

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### Lee Strong

I am Lee Strong, a member of the Washington Science Fiction Association (WSFA). I would like to submit the following letter of comment for The Fanivore section of the next "File 770":

"During the First Friday in December meeting, 4 December 2009, I announced my resignation as President of the Washington Science Fiction Association (WSFA). I did this to allow others the chance to lead the club in directions and ways more congenial to its membership than my vision for the club evidently was.

"I ask that everyone give their best support to President Judy Newton and the other officers old and new. /s/ Lee Strong, WSFA since 1980"

Thank you for your time and attention.

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### Joy V. Smith

Thanks for the con reports, though, of course, Taral Wayne's Worldcon report was epic! And it was nifty having the actual An-

tipication card included. And I loved his virtual apartment! What a fantastic idea! I also admire the people who created it. And, as always, the people who put the con together, though it sounds like they could have cut back on the programming, but I can understand their wanting to utilize all the opportunities they had. I enjoyed all the con photos too, and I think it's neat that Taral got to use his speech in *File 770*. That's an opportunity most people don't get.

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### We Also Heard From

**Bhob Stewart:** Well, it wasn't a typo. [[*The 'h' in Bhob, that is.*]] When I was in college I did a weekly cartoon for the campus newspaper. One day I decided to change my signature on the cartoons. I recalled the fannish "h" and added it in my signature. When I later did fanzine drawings in 1960, the NY fans just began using the signature as my name.

**John Mansfield:** Do you realize that you are the only publication that stated that WHC 2009 ever happened??

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