

WCSFAzine

The Fannish E-zine of the West Coast Science Fiction Association
Dedicated to Promoting the West Coast Science Fiction Community

#18

February 2009



LONG DISTANCE VOYEUR #1, DECEMBER 1990. FANED: PAUL VALCOUR
COVER ART: 'BOP-A-BEE' BY MICHAEL SKEET

CONTENTS:

03..... Credits & Editorial.

FANDOM NEWS & NOTES:

- 04..... **Garth Moving On: Stepping down from BCSFAzine**
04..... **Still Time To Nominate Auroras: Canada's premiere Pro & Fan Awards!**
05..... **A UK Corflu? Fanzine Con in UK? Sounds like a good idea to me!**
05..... **2009 FAAn Awards Ballot: A chance for Fen egoboo! Vote! Vote! Vote!**
06..... **CanFAAn Awards Proposal: by R. Graeme Cameron: Another good idea?**
07..... **Obama Supports Zinedom! Common sense priorities in the White House.**
08..... **DUFF Call For Nominations: A chance to exile a fan to Canada.**
08..... **And Now, The Larch: Stats, stats & more stats re who reads WCSFAzine.**
09..... **Still Time To Vote For TAFF! Exile a Brit to Canada!**
09..... **Still Time To Read Space Cadet #12! Thrill of a lifetime!**
09..... **Canadian Fancyclopedia Dead & Reborn! Arrgh, arrgh, & arrgh!**

FANDOM HISTORY:

- 11..... **Bob Gibson in WWII: A Canadian fan on military leave.**
12..... **Prepare For The Last Days: by William R. (Bob) Gibson: Myth & prophecy.**
14..... **Snow Monkey's Vs. Ice-Rats: by R. Graeme Cameron: International scandal!**
16..... **Henry & Claude (Addenda): by Taral Wayne: Psuedo-Degler broadsheet.**

FANZINE FANDOM:

- 17..... **Retro Canadian Fanzines – Long Distance Voyeur #1: Cool 1990 zine.**

SUPER SCIENCE STUFF:

- 21..... **Ask Mr. Science! Why SF club meetings are so warm and the truth about groundhogs.**

MEDIA MADNESS:

- 22..... **Retro Film Review – RAWHEAD REX (1986) : Wonderful throwback to 1950s B movies.**
24..... **Upcoming Nifty Film Projects: Id monster, giant crab, disaster, aliens, demons & ghosts**
24..... **Progress On Stardance Film: by Jeanne Robinson: Script crafted into shape.**

CONVENTION STUFF:

- 25..... **Pre-Reg for VCON 34! Come on now, you know you wanna do it. Save \$. Buy now!**
37..... **Upcoming Conventions: Radcon 5A, Potlatch 18, Dak-kon XIV, Corflu Zed, Stargate SG1, etc.**

FILTHY PRO HAPPENINGS:

- 26..... **Promoting 'A Strange Place In Time': The**
27..... **Local Authors Happenings: Don DeBrandt, Dave Duncan, William Gibson, Matt Hughes, Paula Johanson, Eileen Kernaghan, Crawford Kilian, Donna McMahon, Nina Munteanu, Spider Robinson, Robert J. Sawyer, Alyx J. Shaw, Lisa Smedman & C. June Wolf.**

LETTERS OF COMMENT:

32..... **Paul Johnston, Alan R. Betz, Lloyd Penney, Dave Haren.**

RESOURCE INFO:

37..... **Upcoming Conventions / Local Clubs / Canadian Sci-Fi facebook sites.**

IMPORTANT STUFF:

40..... **Colophon: Who and what the West Coast Science Fiction Association is.**

41..... **Adverts: White Dwarf Books, Swiss Navy T-Shirts, 'Strange Voyages' CD.**

(Note: All uncredited articles are by the Editor.)

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EDITORIAL



This zine a few days late, in part because of the death of my Canadian Fancyclopedia (see page 22) and my efforts to start a new web site and rebuild my Canfancyclopedia. All I can say is, always keep a backup! Fortunately I had a copy of all of all the text on another computer. Had I lost everything, the prospect of starting ten years work all over again is so daunting I know I would have given up. Instead, I have a lifetime of further research ahead of me. I think that's a good thing... I hope it's a good thing... a retirement hobby in the making.

Garth stepping down from BSCFAzine marks the passing of a Fannish Era. He is the longest serving BCSFAzine editor and deserves many kudos for his dogged determination to carry on year after year. Now he wishes to devote all his zinetime to pubbing his own ish THE ROYAL SWISS NAVY GAZETTE (I stopped being BCSFAzine Editor more than a decade ago for virtually the same reason; I wanted to concentrate on issues of SPACE CADET). I wish Garth great fun!

Felicity will take over from Garth. Always an exciting time when a new editor starts up!

I should have the next issue finished by March 1st. Many thanks to Bill Burns at < <http://www.efanzines.com> > for hosting. Please send me feedback! < rgraeme@shaw.ca >

Cheers! The Graeme

FAN NEWS & NOTES

GARTH MOVING ON

GARTH SPENCER is looking forward to giving up his BCSFAzine obligations to concentrate on the intellectual joy of pursuing fanzine interests entirely for his own pleasure (unlike The Graeme who wouldn't dream of inserting any personal perzine-type stuff into anything as important as the newsletter of the BCSFA!). Apparently his ROYAL SWISS NAVY GAZETTE will take on a more satirical note, be somewhat more Discordian in nature, and undoubtedly will be published more frequently than of late. Garth cheerfully requests art and suitable articles savaging the mundane world with sardonic glee. Then again, who knows? He may explore other possibilities, perhaps publish a new zine entirely!

Or, in his own words (from BCSFAzine #429 Feb 2009): "I decided in January to make a clean break, and to hand over *BCSFAzine* editorship to Felicity this spring. If you have specific requests for changes or new features in *BCSFAzines*, email her at felicity4711@hotmail.com. Until otherwise arranged, the postal address remains the same."

STILL TIME TO NOMINATE AURORAS!

The Nominating period is from January 1st, 2009 to **February 28th**, 2009. [The online Nomination form](#) on this site is now active. A .pdf version of the Nominating ballot is available on the same page for those who prefer to mail-in their nominations. At the end of this period the Short List (the 5 people/organizations who received the highest number of nominations in each category) will be posted and will be on the voting ballot. Categories include:

Professional:

- Best Long-Form Work in English – 2007/2008
- Best Long-Form Work in French – 2007/2008
- Best Short-Form Work in English – 2007/2008
- Best Short-Form Work in French – 2007/2008
- Best Work (Other) in English – 2007/2008
- Best Work in French (Other) – 2007/2008
- Artistic Achievement – 2007/2008

(For a fairly comprehensive listing of eligible professional nominees check out The Canadian SF Works Database at < <http://www.canadiansf.com/> >)

Fannish:

- Fan Achievement (Fanzine) – 2007/2008
- Fan Achievement (Organizational) – 2007/2008
- Fan Achievement (Other) – 2007/2008

[Note that clubzines fall under Fan Achievement (organizational)]

[[For a list of suggested fan nominees, see WCSFAzine #17]

A UK CORFLU?

By R. Graeme Cameron

A bunch of UK fans are thinking of bidding on a UK Corflu (fanzine fanatics) convention for 2010. Believe that would be the first time Corflu was ever held outside North America. Currently the group (not named as yet) are conducting a poll on the fmzfen Yahoo site to see if there is any interest.

Oddly, the options only involve US & UK fans yes or no. So if you're Canadian, which option do you select? There are a number of Canadian members like myself on fmzfen, but I guess were lumped in as part of 'those guys on the other side of the Big Pond'. Oh well.

A spokesman for the poll did state on fmzfen: "Apologies to Murray Moore amongst others as well, but somehow it's hard to think of Canadians as a separate race." This brings to mind so many questions I'll say to heck with it and not bother commenting.

Mind you, Randy Buyers then posted: "At times like this, I'm thankful that Canada doesn't have nukes! Although I'm sure they would apologize after they used them."

And I replied: "What makes you think we don't have nukes? Tisk, tisk..... Anyway, we'd apologize before we used them. At least an hour before. Give the enemy a sporting chance to dig deeper."

In any case, I think Corflu in the UK would be a hoot, but alas could not afford to attend. I can't even afford the upcoming Corflu 26 in Seattle (in March this year). Strongly suspect a Corflu 27 in the UK would generate many a fannish legend, not to mention quite a few good parties, so I would vote yes if I could.



2009 FAAN AWARDS BALLOT

The 2009 FAAn Awards Ballot is now on the Corflu Zed page at <http://efanzines.com/Corflu26/index.htm>

Please note that there will be no on-site voting during Corflu this year. You are not required to submit the ballot, just your choices. -- Bill Burns, January 13, 2009

The winners of the 2009 Fanzine Activity Achievement (FAAn) Awards will be announced during the Brunch at Corflu Zed in Seattle, WA, on March 15, 2009. (www.corflu.org)

There will be no on-site voting during Corflu this year. You are not required to submit the ballot, just your choices.

* By email: Corflu.zed.faan@gmail.com , with a deadline of midnight. Thursday, 3/5/2009

* By postal mail: Hal O'Brien, 418 Hazel Ave N, Kent, WA 98030, USA, with a postmark deadline of Thursday, 2/26/2009

Please list in each category a maximum of three choices, in your order of preference. You are voting on work made public in 2008. Each first place vote earns five points; second place, three

points; third place, one point.

Vote for your favorite Fanzine, Fan Writer, Fan Artist, Letterhack, New Fanzine Fan, and Online Fanac Site.

CANFAAN AWARDS PROPOSAL

This old chestnut of mine has been posted on my Canfancylopedia site for some time. Thought I'd resurrect it. One more kick at the can...

This idea came to me at 5:40 am, Nov 24th, 2004, as I lay soaking in my bathtub prior to getting dressed and going to work. The Americans have the HUGO Awards, and we Canadians have the AURORAS. The Americans have the HOGUs, and we have the ELRONS. The Americans have the FAAn Awards, and we have... why not the CanFAAns?



The FAAn Awards are peer group awards for Fanzine Activity Achievement. Why not have a Canadian equivalent? This is not meant to compete with the Auroras, any more than the FAAn Awards compete with the HUGOS. Both the HUGOS and the AURORAS are open to any SF fan to vote on, but the FAAn Awards are open only to those known to be active in fanzine fandom. Sort of like the difference between the HUGOS (open to all), and the NEBULAS (Only SF writers can vote), a peer group award.

Of course, there may not be enough active fanzine fans in Canada to make the awards viable, but I refuse to believe that. After all, I can think of at least three here in Vancouver alone. Besides, even if only a dozen or two dozen people vote, it's a kind of census of active

fanzine fanac, a way of bringing these people together & into contact, and mostly, a means of advocating fanzine fandom, focusing attention on it, maybe even recruiting new active participants. Hmm. One way of Cdn fanzine fandom to develop a fenaissance in the 21st century.

Here are a few award categories off the top of my head:

- Best Fanzine Faned.
- Best Fanzine Fan Writer.
- Best Fanzine Fan Artist.
- Best Fanzine Fan LocHack.
- Best Fanzine (Paper and/or downloadable from website).

Something like this is by definition small scale, can perhaps be handled by a single O.E. (so to speak) but 'sponsored' by a committee of active fen. No rush, but a concept to be considered and perhaps experimentally tried within a year or two. What do you think?

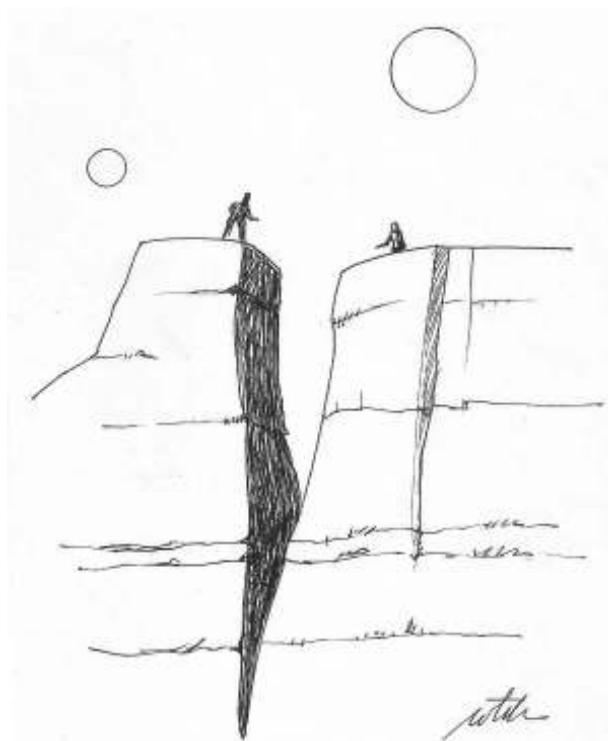
Oh, and what would the award actually consist of? Apart from the egoboo? Something inexpensive. After all, if the Elrons use painted plastic lemons, why not something like a paper fan? Or a mini-fan battery powered? Best would be a propellor beanie, but where the heck can you get those? It's the thought that counts.

OBAMA SUPPORTS ZINEDOM!

As Reported By Andrew Porter on fmzfen Yahoo

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Barack Obama's new administration ordered all federal agencies and departments on Tuesday to stop any pending regulations until they can be reviewed by incoming staff, halting last-minute Bush orders in their tracks.

The review is a tool commonly used by a new administration to delay so-called "midnight regulations" put in place by a former president between the election and Inauguration Day.



Controversial late rules by the outgoing Bush administration include forbidding the carrying of unopened reams of mimeograph paper in some national parks and regulations governing the use of spirit duplicating machines on airplane flights of more than 50 miles, as well as prohibiting the use of Federal funds for establishing love camps in the Ozarks National Wildlife Center in Arkansas.

Federal law requires a 60-day waiting period before any major regulatory changes become law, so some presidents try to publish new major regulations to ensure they go into effect before the new president's inauguration on January 20.

[Editor's note: As usual, Canada leads the way: citizens can carry up to 50 unopened reams of mimeograph paper in ALL parks (more than generous), Air Canada MUST provide a table for ANY sort of duplicating machine next to each seat, and the projected Love Camps for mass-production of

Slans WILL be Government funded (assuming Senate approval is forthcoming once their ongoing inquiry as to feasibility is complete). However, given Obama's surprisingly lengthy track record (in so short a time) of instituting reform, his next measure may well outstrip our policies; it is rumoured he is going to make it mandatory that all literate citizens become Faneds, and offer Government funded dictation and printing services for all illiterate citizens so that they too may join the ranks of Faneds. On the other hand, Republicans have already announced they will oppose the bill rumoured to be pending that would convert the Pentagon into a National Fanzine Archive. Possibly some other site will have to be chosen as a compromise if the bill is to be passed.]

D.U.F.F. (DOWN UNDER FAN FUND) CALL FOR NOMINATIONS!

We are calling for nominations for a DUFF delegation to travel from Australasia to Canada.

In 2009, the DUFF trip is from Australasia to the 2009 Worldcon, Anticipation in Montreal, Canada, 6th to 10th August, 2009.

For the Australasian-North America trip, each candidate must be nominated by three Australasian fans and two North American fans. Each candidate will have a written platform and promises (barring Acts of God) to travel to the 2009 Worldcon, and to serve as administrator of the fund until the next Australasian delegate is elected.

Each nomination must be sent by the nominee and be accompanied by a donation of NZ\$10.00 to DUFF. Or the donation can be given in equivalent local funds to a DUFF representative in your country.

Nominations close on 15th March, 2009.

To nominate a candidate send your nomination to:

(Australasia)
Norman Cates
P.O. Box 13-574
Johnsonville, Wellington
New Zealand
normanc (at) clear.net.nz

OR

(North America)
Sue & Steve Francis
P O Box 58009
Louisville KY 40268
USA
sfsue (at) aol.com or sjf1138 (at) aol.com

Apparently one person has already declared their intention to run, and two others have expressed interest, so it looks like there will be no lack of candidates this time.

AND NOW, THE LARCH

Yes, it's time once again for boring WCSFAzine statistics. Feel free to skip over this article. Personally, I find this stuff fascinating. My interest borders on the obsessive. But hey, it's my baby, and I like to keep tabs on how it's doing.

And bear in mind I may be stiffing myself. When I see 3 hits from Dallas or 4 hits from Toronto in a given month, I assume it's one Dallas fan checking out the site 3 times. Could be 3 separate Dallas fen, but I don't think there's any way to find out. I'd rather err on the side of caution so that I feel comfortable with the results.

WCSFAzine #16 saw 48 readers. WCSFAzine #17 got 51 readers, a slight improvement. The figures work out roughly as follows:

48% American (or 24 readers)
28% Canadian (or 14 readers)
08% United Kingdom (or 4 readers)

05% Unknown (or 3 readers)

11% Other (1 each from Taiwan, Turkey, Japan, Spain, France & Australia)

WCSFAzine #16 had 15 'repeat' readers who had also checked out the previous issue. WCSFAzine #17 nabbed 24 'repeat' readers. That's good. That's a trend I can live with. It means that roughly half of the readers checked in even though they knew what they were in for. Hopefully people will make a habit out of at least glancing at every issue.

STILL TIME TO VOTE FOR TAFF!

UK fans Steve Green and Tom Womack are the contenders for the westward voyage to Anticipation, the Montreal world science fiction convention.

Ballot forms are now available to download from the fund's website, < <http://taff.org.uk/> > which includes a history of previous races and full details on the current candidate's campaigns.

STILL TIME TO READ SPACE CADET #12!

(ALSO AT EFANZINES.COM)



My NEW *Space Cadet*, #12 December 2008 issue, has been online for a month. Am deliriously happy to report 69 readers so far and counting. Join in! Check it out!

Issue #12 contains my personal reminiscences re Forrest Jackerman's *Famous Monsters* & its influence on me, a revised article on *Tom Corbett Space Cadet*, a retro review of John Brunner's *To Conquer Chaos*, articles by Terry Jeeves & Taral Wayne, a dire warning about the evil Protists(!), a short story of mine titled 'See The Dancing Martian!' plus locs & other stuff. Lots of illos.

CANADIAN FANCYCLOPEDIA DEAD AND REBORN

My Imac finally died and with it my Canadian Fancyclopedia. I was trying to upload new material at the time and the resulting computer death convulsions blanked out the site's home page. Doesn't matter, with my Imac died Pagemill, thus I cannot add to or change the original site anymore anyway. Couldn't even post one of those 'This site has moved' signs.

So I deleted the original site and made use of Shaw's free webspace to create a new site for my Canfancyclopedia. It doesn't let you load html, only text, and you can't create sub-pages or link them

together, but it's free and idiot-proof, which is what I need right now. Plus it includes free blog space. And offers 'virtually unlimited text.' (I certainly hope so, given the size of my 'cyclopedia.)

Fortunately I had text backup, so it's just a matter of pouring text into place, sort of. Actually, each 'page' will accept only so much material. Thus I am forced to break up the text for a given letter of the Alphabet into segments. 'A' to 'APAhack', 'APAn' to 'Awards', etc. Will take quite a while to put up everything I had done to date, but I'll get there. And then I'll get back to adding new material.

One loss, can no longer colour code the entries. On the other hand, a major improvement is breaking the entries into three major topics: 'Culture & History', 'Fanzines', & 'Apazines & Apae.' Casual browsers will probably be most interested in the Culture section, collectors and fan historians will find the other two sections useful.

So far I've only installed the A & B sections. It's going to take time. Lots of time.

I liked my IMac, but the old system was cumbersome. I'd add material to my Pagemill program on my IMac with everything automatically written in html. Then unhook the Shaw cable from my wife's computer in the living room and connect it to the cable running into my den. Next I'd disconnect the modem and take it into my den, using it to connect the cable to the IMac. Then I'd upload the new material via some ftp protocol I remember nothing about except that Pagemill handled it automatically. After which I'd disconnect the modem and do everything in reverse until my wife's computer was hooked back up.

Now, using my recently acquired used PC in my den (given to me for free by a friend who'd gotten himself a vastly superior computer) I work on the text in Word, transfer the file to one of those USB stick thingies, take that and plug it into my wife's computer, upload it, call up my web site and simply pour the text into a new page. A lot less hassle.

The Shaw webspace is nice and simple. If you are already a Shaw customer, I recommend it. Costs nothing (already included in your bill) and, I repeat, offers free blogging to boot.

The new site location is: < <http://canadianfancylopedia.shawwebspace.ca/> >

I was a bit worried Google wouldn't find it, but after a few days my site raced to the top of the list of choices whenever anyone googles "Canadian fancylopedia." This is not really surprising, given that there is only ONE Canadian Fancylopedia.

However, I have a confession to make. At first I stated "This site is under construction" as the first line, similar to millions of other sites. No wonder Google paid no attention. When I changed the first part of the first line to read "The Canadian Fancylopedia, at this new site as of Jan 2009" suddenly the site was googleable, top of the list. Excellent.

Only fly in the ointment, what if there's a limit on the number of pages allowed? Well, can only press ahead and see what happens. For the moment I am content with the service. Reconstruction continues apace, albeit slowly.



FANDOM HISTORY

BOB GIBSON IN WWII

In WCSFAzines #6 & #8 I 'proved' that the Canadian fan artist William R. 'Bob' Gibson who contributed art to LIGHT & CENSORED during WWII was the same Bob Gibson producing fan art and attending conventions in Alberta during the 1980s. Well, thanks to Robert Hansen's ongoing posting online of wartime issues of FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST further light has been thrown on Gibson's experiences in England during the war.



His address at the time was M3020 Gnr. R.H.Q., 11th C.A.F.R, R.C.A., Canadian Army, England. (36) Quite a mouthful.

The July 42 (#21) issue of FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST has a photo and a brief 'biography' of Gibson: "Ladies and Gentlemen, on my left is W. R. (Bob) GIBSON of Calgary, Canada, now in Britain, and acting as English representative of the BFSWRS. Asked for an introduction, Bob says: "Introduction? I can try. 'Er...unaccustomed as I am to...' But seriously, born in 1908 near Calgary and in sight of the Rockies about 80 miles away. Was fully determined on a career of science, but got laid up for too many years to make a go at it. Stfanaticism may be a compensating mechanism (or fixation). Long and narrow built with permanently "Trip to the Moon and Around It". Three years later I found Serviss' "Columbus of Space" among the fairy stories in the juvenile department of the library. It probably confirmed me in the stf habit. Began collecting promags in 1928, all stf in '31. Contacted my first fan in 1940 - Ted Carnell - indirectly, and first met him and others in 1941."

In the August 1943 FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST he is listed as the 36th fan to join the 82 member (at that time) BFS, or British Fantasy Society.

Earlier, in the August 1942 issue his 'on leave' activities are described by the editor, Michael Rosenblum: "To round off this busy period Bob Gibson, our tame Canuck fan, wandered in on the Rennison household during his latest leave. He left there to spend the weekend with me & hoped to pay a flying visit to the Turner ménage en passant whilst returning to his unit. Bob settled down here with a table full of booklists, reference books, and notes, a few stencils and his own notebooks and was not to be dragged away. We hardly had chance to talk to each other that busy weekend and I hope to get to know him on a future visit!!"

The October 1942 issue mentioned: "And Bob Gibson appears to have managed a leave or something cos he looked in on George Medhurst in London just recently."

And the Jan 1943 issue of FWD stated: "Canadian Bob Gibson landed in on us the other evening and we spent a pleasant time together..... Another expedition was that made by the aforementioned Bob Gibson during a 9 days leave recently. Previously scheduled were visits to Aberdeen and Doug Webster; and Inverness' Edwin Macdonald with, if possible, a glance in, en voyage, at your editor in Leeds. The latter did not eventuate, however, but an extension to the original 7 days leave allowed a visit to a cousin now stationed at Manchester, followed by a rush over the Pennines to Leeds. To conclude the performance, hearing of Ted Carnell's return, Bob dropped in on him on the way back. Not bad going eh? We hope to drag a fuller record of the voyage and attendant impressions out of the gallant Canuck for publication in a future issue of FIDO (FWD)"

So it appears Gibson preferred to meet with fans the length and breadth of England when he went on leave. Bear in mind he was already a major collector of zines and books, and I suspect his hidden motive was to acquire more of same from local collectors, i.e. British fans. Whether he stockpiled them to eventually be sent home after the war, or mailed them in segments during the war (risking losing any given mailing depending on the luck of the U-Boats), I do not know.

Gibson also contributed cover art to FWD. I include the piece he did for the August 1942 issue #22. And, it appears, Gibson occasionally wrote for FIDO! Here is an article he did for issue #30 (Aug 1943):

PREPARE FOR THE LAST DAYS

By William R. (Bob) Gibson

Pioneers in the North West Territories and Alaska sometimes tell of the Ice Worms, creatures made for "Probability Zero". You can sometimes see the holes they make, sinuous white lines and ovoid areas in clear ice. Perfectly transparent, they are invisible. Brittle, they break with the ice they burrow in. Yet they have saved the life of many a starving man. They make a nourishing soup, with a flavour gourmets would rave over, if they could get any.



To make it you chop out a large piece of clear ice - any ice for they are surprisingly common - and hold it in boiling water just long enough to warm it slightly. This kills and relaxes the worms. (You mustn't melt the ice - the worms spoil if heated slowly.) Then you shake them out of their holes ... they also form bait for fur-bearing fish, but that is another story.

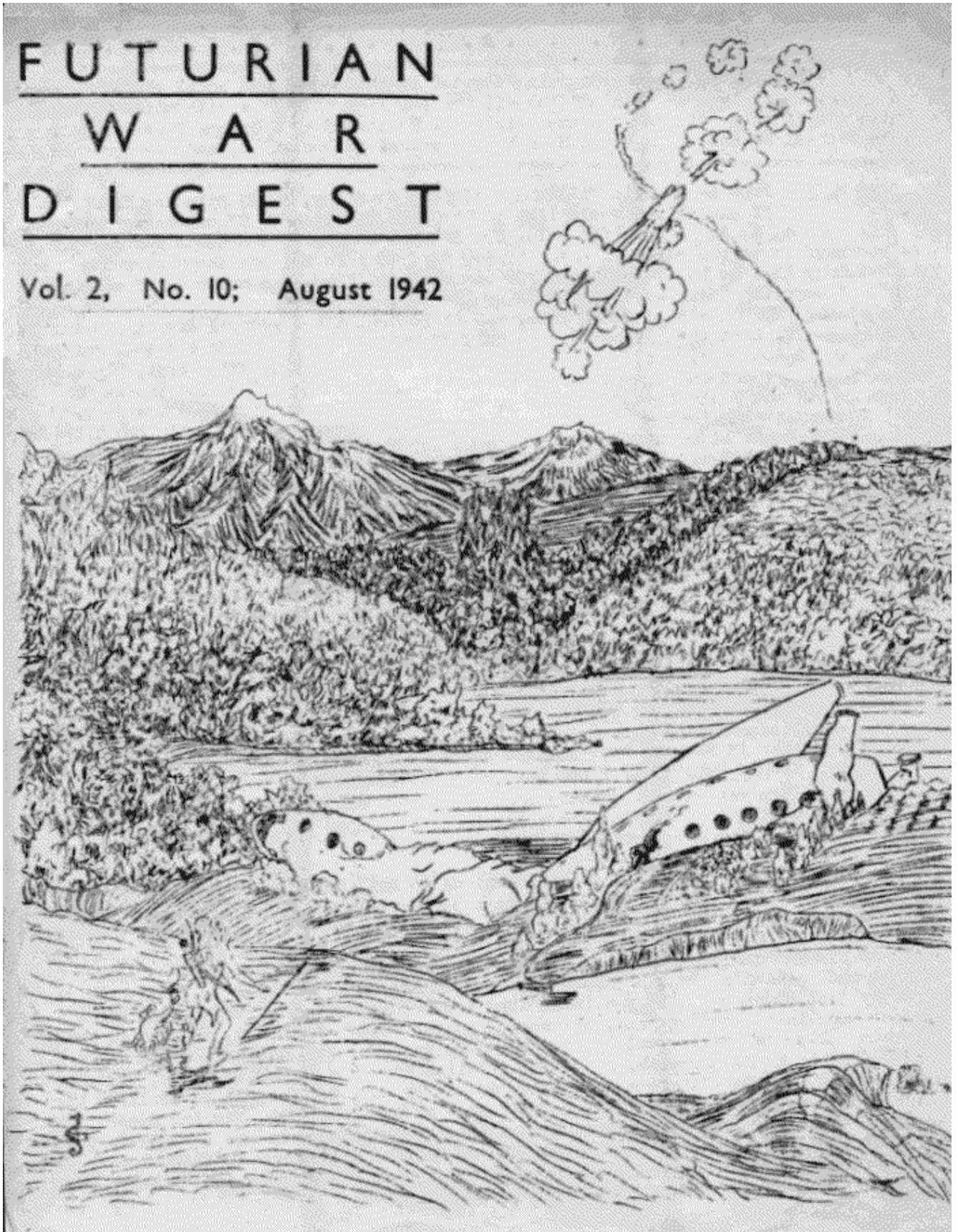
Yet there are, if not ice-, snow-dwelling worms, and insects and plants. Both the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC and NATURAL

HISTORY (organ of the Smithsonian Institute) have in the past published accounts and photos of tiny, bright-red worms - true worms - found in the snow high up in Californian mountains. And in northeastern states and in Alberta a small insect lives in alpine meadows above the snow line. The soil never thaws deeper than an inch or so. The insect slightly resembles a long-legged termite, or a young - and pincerless - earwig. Yet it is several years old, and has gone through several metamorphoses, before reaching adulthood. Slow moving. Hold one in your hand and it becomes active, but dies of heat prostration in a few minutes. Several of them, caught this summer [1942 - DW] are being kept in refrigerators in Canadian universities. To complete the picture, in the far north, over tundras and further south in Europe, North America and probably Asia "red snow" is sometimes found. It arouses fear or interest according to the intelligence of the finders. A one-celled plant, an alga, causes it.

And so, in the latter days, when the sun has converted much of its available mass into energy and the weakened bonds of gravity let the gelid earth slip further away, its reddish light may still support life forms. Two species of creature and a food plant. And up until the cold, black final days, earth's sorry history of wars may carry on.

FUTURIAN
WAR
DIGEST

Vol. 2, No. 10; August 1942



Gibson makes a sound, quite reasonable prediction re life at the end of the world. He also refers to 'Ice Worms,' a tall tale which I, even though I'm a Canadian, cannot recall ever hearing. It sounds like something out of the ballads of Robert Service ('The Shooting of Dan McGrew', 'The Heart of the Sourdough', etc.), but I can't place it. A delightful 'myth' nevertheless.

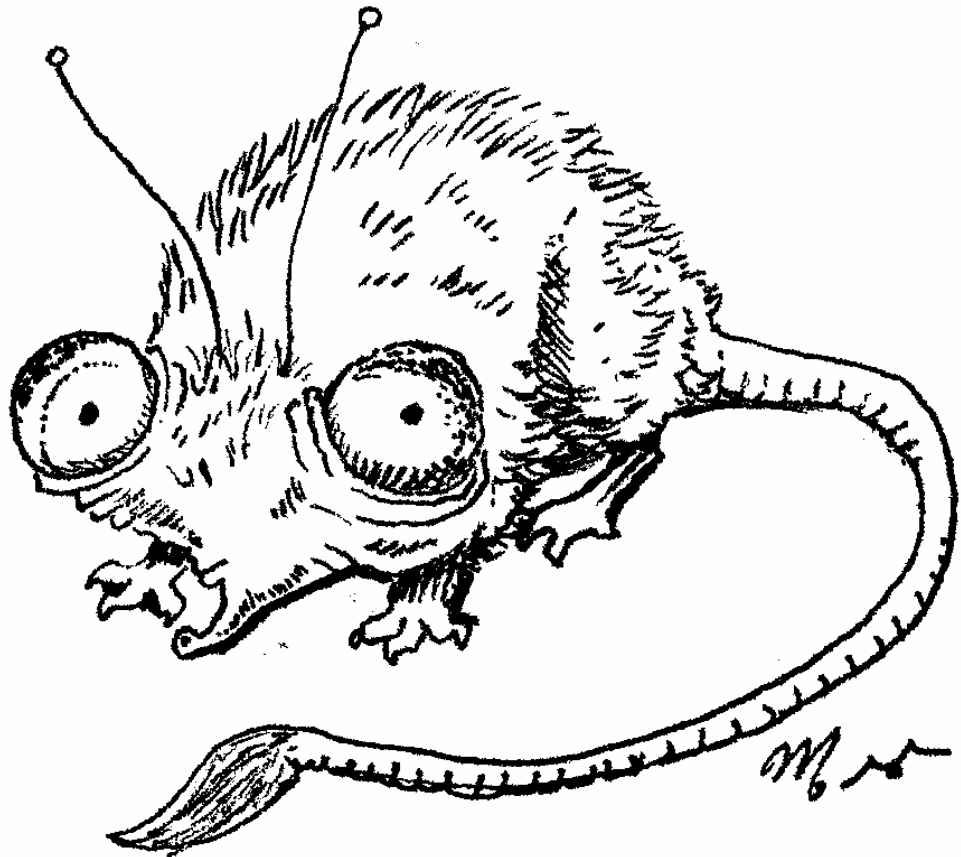
Which brings me to a 'myth' of my own, "Snow Monkeys Vs. Ice-Rats" which I published in SPACE CADET #2 back in March of 1995. Gibson's 'Ice Worms' is a good lead-in excuse to reprint my spoof article:

SNOW MONKEYS VS. ICE-RATS

By R. Graeme Cameron

This is a sad, terrible thing to bring to your attention, but it's a sad, terrible world, and we must face reality, for that's what SF is all about, eh?

The December 94 issue of NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC featured an article on animals at play, including (as shown above left) the endearing habit Japanese Snow Monkey juveniles have of fashioning snowballs and carrying them around for days, even weeks at a time. One wonders why. Sure is cute though.



Then the April 95 issue of DISCOVER Magazine

included an article, sandwiched between one on arctic algae and another on rising sea levels, on the subject of the recently discovered Ice-Rats (or "Hotheaded Naked Ice-Borers") of Antarctica, complete with bloodcurdlingly repulsive photograph (see above right). Turns out these hairless 6-inch rodents live in tunnels within the ice. Because of their high metabolic rate their body temperature is 110 degrees, and they have the ability to radiate this heat through the blood-vessel enriched "hot-plate" structure on their heads. They are, in fact, capable of melting their way through the ice faster than a penguin can waddle, with horrifying consequences. To quote from the article:

"A pack of ice-borers will cluster under a penguin and melt the ice and snow it's standing on. When the hapless bird sinks into the slush, the ice-borers attack, dispatching it with bites of their sharp incisors. They then carve it up and carry its flesh back to their burrows, leaving behind only webbed feet, a beak, and some feathers."

Well, to tell the truth, I was horrified. I mean, the poor penguins! But then I began to think... the April issue. Could this be a jape? Nah! The photograph is proof. Can't be an April Fool's joke. Everyone knows you can't fake photos.... Still, I wondered...

Then I watched the recent C.B.C. (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) TV documentary on "THE SAVAGE ICE-RINKS OF SINGAPORE." Shook me to my very core, it did. Heartily ashamed to be involved, for all Canadians share the guilt. After all, we sold them our Canadian Ice-rink technology. Surely we're not to blame? We were under the innocent impression that the sinful sadists of Singapore merely wanted to spruce up facilities for their Olympic hockey team? (They had previously lacked an ice-rink, so the acquisition of such marked a quantum leap forward in their training.) Alas, we should have known! The specifications called for an ice thickness of ten feet or more! To suggest, as embarrassed Canadian Government officials did, that we thought it was something to counteract the effects of a tropical climate, is too much to swallow. No, I'm afraid we must share the blame for the creation of this hideous blood sport!

I'm talking about SNOW MONKEYS VS. ICE-RATS! Never mind cock fights. Never mind pit-bulls! Snow Monkeys Vs. Ice-Rats is the cruelest sport of our time! I weep tears copiously to think of the thousands of blood-thirsty spectators howling from the arena's stands as the poor little Snow Monkeys shuffle frantically about, desperately seeking firm ice on which to stand, pursued by schools of relentless Ice-Rats! Millions of dollars in bets are placed. Which Snow Monkey is first to be dragged under? When will the last? To think that something so gosh-darned cute must be eaten alive to slake the gambling thirst of the fiendish mob! Oh, the humanity, the humanity!

Mind you, the Snow Monkeys are feisty little devils. They don't give up without a fight. If they can pack a snowball and hurl it into the gaping maw of the emerging Ice-Rat, the latter will choke to death before its body heat can melt the snow. Trouble is, the ice-rink is made of ice. No matter how hard they scabble at the ice with their tiny little claws, the Snow Monkeys cannot make snowballs out of rink ice. They have to wait till the ice around them begins to turn to slush (as the horrible Ice-Rats melt up from below) and quickly put together a snowball from the slush, pack it hard, then leap back as the Ice-Rats burst into the open while flinging the snowball down into an Ice-Rat's gullet with great vigour. Not an easy thing to do. It's all a question of timing. What's more, Ice-Rats attack in packs. For this defense to work, the Snow Monkeys have to cluster together, then leap and throw in unison. This is referred to as *"The Dance of the Snow Monkeys."* Considered a beautiful thing to see, though I found the footage pathetic and sad.

I'm sorry. I thought I could write about this coherently and dispassionately, but I'm really too wrought up about this. But at least I've managed to bring this horrible blood-gambling to your attention. We've really got to do something about this, perhaps get Greenpeace involved. Or at the very least, force the Japanese Government to outlaw the export of Snow Monkeys. That would be a start.....

P.S. For those heartless cynics who doubt the veracity of this article... I got pictures!

[Editor's note: Harry Warner Jr. was kind enough to comment on this article in a LoC to SC#3: "For my money though, the best thing in your issue was your piece about the snow monkeys and the ice rats. This was really a gem, in the best tradition of fannish humour..." Thanks, Harry.]

HENRY & CLAUDE (ADDENDA)

By Taral Wayne

As a further comparison between Claude Degler and Henry Argasinski (see last issue), Taral sends the following example of an Argasinski Broadsheet.

COSMIC CIRCLE IS ALIVE AND WELL!

COSMIC CIRCLE (kos'mik sūr'kel): A secret underground society that purports to be an evolutionary advance in the human species.*

*Secret Masters of Toronto Fandom

Funny, isn't it? They thought it was; at least while they pulled a fannish gag on a young neo. Later when that very same neo successfully managed to amalgamate several small SF clubs to form one giant conglomeration, they cried. That neo's name is Henry Argasinski.

Today's modern **COSMIC CIRCLE**, now known as the **STELLAR FOUNDATION/ COSMIC CIRCLE**, is not unlike the original **COSMIC CIRCLE** started nearly forty years ago by Claude Degler; many of the goals are the same. It is, however, a bit closer to reality. **SF/CC** has one of North American Fandom's most rapidly growing active memberships. Its annual budget spending amounts to nearly twice the combined amount spent in one year by both the Ontario Science Fiction Club and the British Columbia Science Fiction Association (OSFIC and BCSPA respectively). But don't let this fool you; the main emphasis is to have a relaxed fannish club. A rundown of their activities looks like this:

COSMICOM (**COSMIC CIRCLE COMMENTATOR**) is their monthly bulletin which usually averages a dozen pages. The **SF/CC** also publishes zines **CELESTIAL ALMANAC**, **TRANQUILLUM**, **DOPPLERGANGER** and **GRIMALKIN**; plus many **PAPERCHIPS**.

TRAWNACON is their annual relaxicon held in Southern Ontario; this year it's at Mississauga's Erindale College, June 18 -20, featuring guests like Spider Robinson, Mike Glicksohn and Dennis Prophet.

FANFEST, **SF ERINDALE** and **FANCON** are their one-day regional cons.

TORONTO IS FREE FOR '83 is their Worldcon bid for 1983.

NORTHERN FAN FUND (NorFF) sends one lucky fan from Midwest Fandom to the Worldcon or Eurocon.

COSMIC CITY DEVELOPMENT CORP. is designed to bring into existence a city for SF fans + convention center on Long Pt. in Lake Erie.

SF/CC meets weekly at different permanent locations. Films accompany many meetings. Interested?

STELLAR FOUNDATION

INFO: SF/CC, c/o 359 Pacific Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M6P 2R2.

FANATICAL FANZINE FABLES

RETRO CANADIAN FANZINES: LONG DISTANCE VOYEUR #1

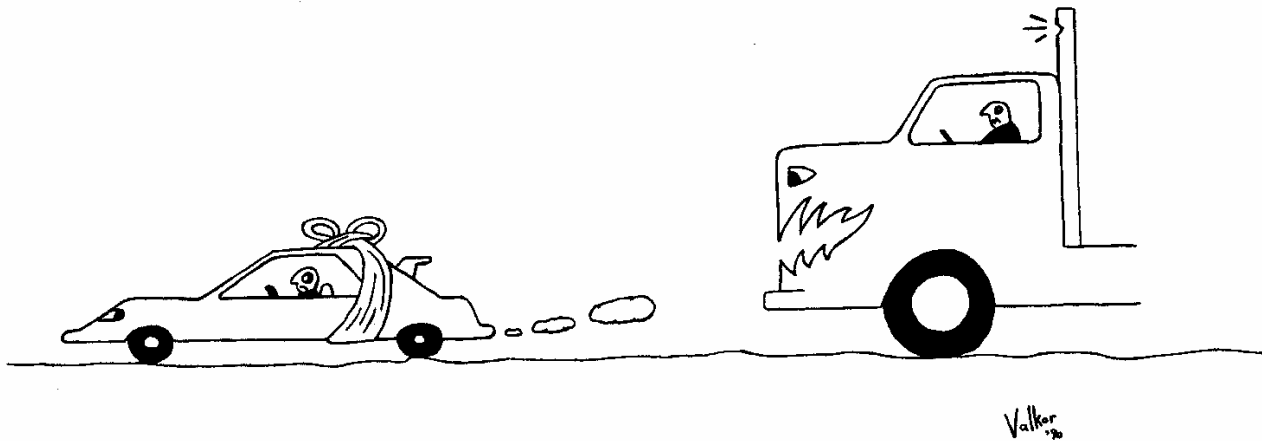
Faned: Paul Valcour.

LONG DISTANCE VOYEUR #1, December 1990. Published out of Nepean, Ontario.

The cover, actually the logo for Valcour's 'Bop-a-Bee Press' by Michael Skeet is one of my all time favourite zine covers. There's something refreshingly simple and pure in this image of a Saxophone-playing bee adrift in a sea of blue, something almost hypnotically attractive. I like it. I like it a lot.

The zine itself is two columns of dense text for 17 pages, but well worth reading. Basically it's Paul's account of his driving trip to CON-VERSION 7/CANVENTION 10 as the CUFF winner that year. Unfortunately, Paul writes: "*I shall save the description of my activities as CUFF winner and ordinary, mortal fan at Con-Version VII/Canvention 10 for issue #2.*" Unfortunate, in that he never did publish a second issue. Oh well.

Plenty of drama in this issue though: *INCIDENT IN NORTHERN ONTARIO*



But fate intervened. The audacity, and hence the folly, of my aspirations was cruelly mirrored before me... an 18-wheeler driving a few hundred feet ahead of me lost a 1-foot cube metal load leveler and steel rod off the transport onto the gravel track of construction road we were both traveling on. Having driven a couple of hundred kilometers in such dusty conditions, the item was essentially camouflaged; that and the fact the transport was kicking up a fair bit of dust. With one track to follow (we were going over a gully, and there were no shoulders or guardrail), Black Beauty had to eat the damn thing.

The transmission and bell housing were destroyed; the gas tank was severely ruptured; the stick shift and console were no more; and I had an ashtray in the ceiling of my car.

I suppose there is a good side to almost everything: the load leveler had not gone under my seat. (Now I know the feel of black humour.)

...The driver of the 18-wheeler had not noticed he had lost the load-leveler, nor noticed my predicament; hence he had not stopped. No, I didn't see any distinguishing company logos or licence plate.

Fortunately he was able to get a rental car to drive to Winnipeg. There Linda and John Mansfield put him up, then drove him to Conversion in Calgary. About which nothing is written, sigh.

If I interpret the text correctly (there are somewhat confusing topic jumps) Paul stopped off in Edmonton and then Winnipeg on his way back, before picking up his repaired 'Black Beauty' to drive home through the wilds of Northern Ontario.

Robert Runte and I had a very interesting conversation on the subject of CUFF while I was in Edmonton... My general opinion is that CUFF is for active or noteworthy SF fans, regardless of their field of expertise (eg.- fanzines, convention organizing, writing, art, costuming... by definition this would exclude fans only involved in non-SF areas (eg.- comics, SCA, mystery.....)

On the other hand, Robert takes the interesting position that CUFF could be for fanzine writers, artists and editors alone. It doesn't matter what the fanzine is about: SF, media, mystery, sociology, computer science, comics, Star Trek, etc. This was quite an eye-opener for me. I am used to the traditional fanzine editor's lament for the good ol' days when fans were fanzine fans. But it always centred around SF... His position also leads to exclusions: club and convention organizers, costumers, comic book artists, etc.

Robert's argument was refreshingly new, and led to the toughest debate I've had the pleasure of participating in all year... Robert can fix those steely eyes of his on you, under the subterfuge of kindly, professorial interest, all the while wringing every last ounce of reasoned logic you can muster. One's collar becomes too tight; your palms become sweaty; caffeine no longer seems sufficient to drive your brain...

When I was Cuff delegate and Administrator in 1997 I attempted to enforce a Robert Runte-like policy of only Fanzine-related fans being eligible. Such was the vehemence of John Mansfield's opposition to this, I gave up and followed Valcour's approach. Truth to tell, the net should probably be spread as wide as possible if one is to catch ANYTHING, so moribund is fandom's interest in CUFF.

(Speaking of which, what IS the current status of the CUFF race for choosing a delegate to attend Convention at the upcoming Worldcon in Montreal? I haven't got a clue.)

As is typical of fanzines, there are asides on non-SF topics, and just as typical, they encapsulate moments of time, in this case levels of technology.

In one case, Paul talks about joining a video club, the CBS/Columbia House Video Club which offered 5 movies for 50 cents a tape. After which, he was relieved to see, they *charged club prices were now averaging \$25 to \$40 rather than the ridiculously exorbitant prices of \$60 to \$100 common during the eighties...*

I can't remember the year, but I do remember when the first video store opened in Vancouver. It was on Granville street. It was a rental store, and by Ghu they were charging as much as \$60 just to rent a film!

"Can I buy a film?" I asked. I particularly wanted KING KONG. \$100 maybe?

The clerk's eyebrows shot up. "Buy a film? Why the hell would anyone want to buy a film? These things are expensive! Why spend \$200 for something you're only going to watch once? Maybe twice? You're crazy!"

“But I’d like to collect my favourites...”

“Look buddy. We’re here to make money. We’ve researched this carefully. Nobody wants to collect films. Nobody wants to buy films. Nobody ever will. Rental only. That’s the way it’s always going to be. Only a moron would want to waste money buying a film. We don’t serve morons. We make more money renting over and over again.”

Well, not to me he didn’t.

Gad, in those days most people didn’t have video players. You’d go to the store and rent a couple of films AND a video player, then bring it all back the next day. Quite a hassle.



Now I own more than 200 SF videos. I’ll be damned if I’m going to replace them all with DVDs, especially as DVDs are being replaced by Blue Ray or whatever, soon to be replaced by whatever is coming up next. I’ve got three VCRs. That should last me for a while.

The other tech article has to do with Paul being asked by Elizabeth Holden what sort of computer she should get for writing purposes. Paul has some very interesting things to suggest, which sound very primitive in light of today’s standards:

I found a perfectly serviceable used IBM XT clone with a 20-meg hard disk drive, CGA monitor and graphics card and keyboard for \$1,000.....

You are looking at maybe \$500 for an inexpensive, letter quality printer. The best dot matrix, 24-pin printers will run more than \$1000....

He goes on to say that laser printers are way too expensive for individuals, and often have limited formatting capabilities: *For instance, the Hewlett-Packard LaserJet printers (one of the most common) at my office underlines everything I want italicized or bolded. It also won’t print out characters larger*

(taller) than normal type.

I strongly recommend getting a hard disk drive of no less than 10 megabytes... It is a drag to continually change diskettes throughout your work...

A 2400 baud modem board will cost roughly \$200. Modems are also available at 9,600 and 19,200 baud rates...They will cost 2 to 3 times as much...

Then comes the interesting subject of what passed for an internet in those days:

Is going on-line worth it? Accessing and communicating on computer nets can be fun and very definitely addictive. I incurred almost no long distance charges and still managed to correspond and make friends with folk in Minneapolis, Denver and Philadelphia by accessing SF boards already

carried here in Ottawa.... On SF alone, one can find conferences on SF writing, convention organizing, Star Trek, Fandom & so on...

But the downside of computer nets include:

You frequently have to sift through large amounts of junk to find letters and comments of interest.

The caliber of writing and thoughtful correspondence, I find, is lower on average than that found in fanzines and letter correspondence (possibly due to time pressures or the transient nature of the medium).

Some computer nets are expensive (unless you have a business to write such costs off, search out the free or nominal membership fee boards).

Last but not least, waiting in queue to log on to some computer nets or boards is frustrating and ties up you and your computer (waiting as long as 20 to 60 minutes is not unusual for a busy board).

So it's not surprising that Paul concludes his advice by stating: "I rarely access computer nets anymore. I prefer reading and writing fanzines and letters."

There are also glimpses of the Ottawa SF Society of the day: *A Who Cares party was going on that Saturday night. A popular local fan, Harry Middleman, was hosting it... Harry's Who Cares are always well attended. The Ottawa SF Society (OSFS) was there passing out the latest (November/90) issue of the OSFS Statement. The big news was that there was no news, ie. the same exec members were the only ones (to date) nominated and willing (key word) to stand for election at the annual OSFS elections.*

(As an aside, I have resigned as OSFS Archivist and Librarian. Since the OSFS/Mensa Reading for the Blind project was going nowhere, I resigned as member of that subcommittee also...)

The Convalescence crew were also there, basking in the organizational success of their relaxicon. They were satisfied with the approximate 70 paid attendees... I was pleased at their decision to donate \$100 to Maplecon.

Naturally, it had not gone unnoticed that I had not attended Convalescence. All three of their guests, Lloyd & Yvonne Penney and Larry Stewart, are friends of mine. However, I can and do see them other times; and the activities at Convalescence were not my cup of tea.

Harry's pre-recorded videocassette collection is big. I estimate he has over 200 films and epics in his library. Not a few fans went over to browse through it. Talk about a conversation item... Charles Mohapel is passing around his latest binder collection of convention photos. He balls a fan out (he does that a lot) for spoiling a photo shot at Ad Astra... Joe Casey is quietly drinking the beer he has brought in a corner. (Current Ottawa SF club parties and Who Cares are conspicuously non-alcoholic, non-smoking and devoid of music. Elsewhere old time fans nod knowingly why Ottawa parties have become dull.)... The PAplexy gang come in late, because of their collation. They leave almost just as quickly to eat somewhere else.



There are divers other short articles on CDs, magazines, movies and fanzines. In his conclusion Paul talks about this first (and last) issue of his perzine:

LONG DISTANCE VOYEUR began as a result of my joining the APA GALACTUS. Writing in an APA (amateur press association collection of fanzines for the neofan) was an activity I never really saw myself doing. They are essentially closed circuit markets, the readership numbering anywhere from 10 to 30 average. I just couldn't spending all that time and energy for so few.

Believe it or not, I still have not changed my mind. The GALACTUS gang snagged me because I knew and respected many of the contributors in North America, and the writing was good. Perhaps, it was Keith Solty's homemade beer and Nancy's lasagna. But, in my case, I couldn't help but notice that the material was appropriate for a more traditional fanzine. So voila! ...

...Art Widner. We have never met: and it is not likely he knows me beyond having my name on his mailing list. Yet, he and his fanzine, YHOS, epitomized (for me) the tradition and kindred spirit of fandom.... Hopefully LONG DISTANCE VOYEUR may present a newer, more polished look to fanzines today, but I must admit to being touched by the feel of YHOS. The articles and letters bridged old memories with today's hope of garnering new apprentices in fanzine pubbing, writing, art and letter-hacking.

Perhaps that is in the back of my mind, when I send LONG DISTANT VFOYEUR to Art and other good folk. I may not be part of the past, but I would like to be involved in the future.

SUPER SCIENCE STUFF



ASK MR. SCIENCE!

(As submitted by Al Betz, Corresponding Secretary for Mr. Science.)

Mr. WCSAAL, of Burnaby, B.C., asks:

WHY IS IT SO WARM AT SF MEETINGS?

Mr. SCIENCE: The extreme acceleration of mental activity required to keep up with the constant, high-speed flow of remarkably intelligent ideas and concepts at these gatherings is made possible by a major increase in the brain's consumption of blood-borne organic compounds derived from the alkanes, particularly ethane, by the substitution of one hydroxyl radical for one hydrogen atom. This results in a 5 degree Kelvin temperature increase in the upper part of the body. Incidentally, Mr. Science recommends, as an energy saving measure, the universal use of the Kelvin system of temperature measurement, since even the most cold-blooded person will hesitate to turn up the furnace when told that room temperature is 293 degrees.

Ms. LS of Port Moody, B.C., ask:

WHAT DOES THE GROUNDHOG DO FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR?

MR. SCIENCE: As your question so correctly points out, the groundhog's employment prospects are highly seasonal in nature. All the rest of the society owes a large debt of gratitude to the groundhog, since it was for the benefit of this creature, which makes such an invaluable contribution to the science of weather prediction, that unemployment insurance was created.

MEDIA MADNESS

RETRO FILM REVIEW: RAWHEAD REX (1986)

OR WHY 'GIVE ME THAT OLD TIME RELIGION' SHOULD NOT BE SUNG IN IRELAND

By The Graeme

Some people are renowned because of the number of chicken wings they consume while pubbing. Old Rawhead Rex is the undisputed King of raw human head connoisseurs, but you'd expect this from a Celtic God freed from underneath a Dolmen who goes around killing people till they stop him. As good a basis for a plot as any. Taken from the short story by Clive Barker. So what does he think of the film?

"Rawhead Rex is a bad picture. I did the first draft and somebody else rewrote it. I was never allowed on the set."

Aha! Typical writer's complaint; it being implied that the story is of course much better than the film. Despite the film's flaws, it is my opinion whoever rewrote the script did Barker a favour. The story is fun, but there's little in the way of character motivation; the film does a better job of pacing and development, provides more clues for the viewer.

For example: The Irish actor portraying the Verger Declan gives a standout performance, the best in the film, as a mad Pagan revivalist Christian cleric utterly enthralled by the imminent return of the God with bad breath (it IS a predator after all) to the point where when asked "What will your God do to you when he's through with you?" he replies "Kill me, I hope!" Consequently his eventual confrontation with Rex, a rather rude baptism scene, is well built up and comes as no surprise. In the story it comes from nowhere. Incidentally, this method of baptism is also employed by biker gangs as part of the initiation ritual. Appropriately pagan, if unhygienic.

Another example: In the story the main character, a visiting yuppie, attempts to convince the police the murderer isn't human; something they're well aware of because they've already seen him in action. In the film the main character, a visiting Professor, attempts the same, but of course is dismissed as an idiot because no one else has seen the monster and lived to tell about it. This is more believable, if rather standard for a monster film.

In the story a carving depicting the local legend concerning the previous internment of Rawhead Rex is hidden beneath an altar cloth, but in the film the legend is depicted rather magnificently by one of the church's ancient stained glass windows. This helps explain the continued survival of the not-so-

secret fear-ridden local legend all the better, not to mention helping to set the mood and tone of the film.

One last example: In the story Rawhead spares a woman (she manages to die anyway) because he smells her menstrual blood (he cannot kill the yet unborn). In the film he recoils from the sight of her pregnant belly, which is a much better tie-in to his final confrontation with -- as the Latin inscription in his stained glass portrait has it -- "Death fears only that which he cannot be or do."

I dare state that the film, as opposed to the story, is a more carefully thought out conflict of religion which in its treatment of pagan survival at times approaches *THE WICKER MAN* in mood and feeling.



But let's not get carried away. The most frustrating thing about this film is that it could have been better, tighter; it reeks of a potential barely met. Even when viewed as a mere monster movie it's not quite consistent enough to suspend disbelief. It misses the mark somehow, just. Pity.

"Must have been a gang of perpetrators," muses one Constable, staring at the claw and tooth marks evident in a Farmer's wrecked house. And what a police force this small Irish village has! Eight Constables, four police cars, riot gear and machine guns a plenty. Something to do with the IRA threat I suppose. Or perhaps this is simply typical of any small community living in fear of a visit by soccer hooligans from Glasgow, Belfast or Manchester? At any rate, what finally convinces the police there's a monster on the loose (apart from the gnawed bits of people strewn about the countryside) is the fact that the main character's inept drawing of what appears to be a punk needing a shave matches that of a child witness. Proof enough boyo! Get out the guns!

And Rawhead's hypnotic powers are pretty stupid and totally unnecessary to the plot. Here, I must admit, the film is worse than the story. How the heck would an old Celtic war god recognize a police superintendent in civilian clothes as a figure of authority? Answer: because the scriptwriter needed a hypnotized human to sneak up unnoticed behind a line of police and set fire to their cars. At least in the story Rex is afraid of cars till he discovers that they burn real pretty, and then HE uses petrol to set fire to the village in order to flush out fresh meat. A neat touch. Too bad the film ruined it.

I actually liked the scene in the caravan park where Rex overturns a trailer. Reminded me of the car flipping scene in *THE CREATURE WALKS AMONG US*, the sequel to *THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON*. As in those two earlier films, the monster is shown openly under good lighting conditions, but with less success. The prosthetic mask looks suitably capable of biting people's heads off, but lacks mobility of feature. So the actor within the appliance sometimes relies on gestures more typical of Godzilla in one of his wrestling moods. This doesn't help the film.

The ending, while visually reminiscent of a dozen other movies, is at least stronger than the story where 'poor' Rawhead Rex is simple beaten to death by an angry mob of surviving villagers.

Overall, despite frustrating flaws, RAWHEAD REX is a delightful throwback to the classic monster films of the 1950s.

Hmmm... as far as I know Barker made-up the 'character' Rawhead Rex. There is no such deity in Celtic religion, I think... But Celtic paganism IS undergoing a powerful revival these days... hmmm... don't go digging around those Dolmens!

UPCOMING NIFTY FILM PROJECTS:

John Carter of Mars: is a live action Disney film based on the Edgar Rice Burroughs Barsoom series. Director Andrew Stanton stated: "The style is going to be very real, not highly stylized...as if a National Geographic crew stumbled across a preserved civilization..." Hmmm?

The Imaginarium of Dr. Parnassus: is a Terry Gilliam film. Shades of '*The Circus of Dr. Lao,*' it's about a traveling show where the audience chooses emotional states (concerning their future?)

The Zero Theorem: is Terry Gilliam's next film, a "sci-fi western thriller largely set in a church laboratory" starring Billy Bob Thornton as a mad scientist. Lots of not-clones & cyber-suits.

Captain Nemo: A review of an early draft of the script indicates a disaster in the making. The best they can come up with is a giant crab and assorted mutant fish, plus an over-emphasized love affair.

Foundation: Rights to Isaac Asimov's 'Foundation' trilogy have been purchased by Sony. The movies will be directed by Roland Emmerich. How novels about the ability to scientifically predict future history will translate to the screen remains to be seen. Possibilities...

252: Signal of Life: is a Japanese disaster movie (Tokyo destroyed by earthquake AND a mega-typhoon) where the Tokyo Hyper Rescue Unit (an actual branch of the Tokyo Fire Department) has 18 minutes during the eye of the storm to rescue people from the subway. Said to be good.

The Thing: is a prequel to the 1982 John Carpenter version. Remember the Norwegian camp? This Universal production directed by Matthijs Van Heijningen will detail what happened there.

Drag Me to Hell: is a horror film directed by Sam Raimi about a woman who learns she's going to be tormented by a demon for three days, and on the fourth day be dragged down to hell. Quite a problem.

The Graveyard Book: A Neil Gaiman novel rather like Kipling's '*The Jungle Book*', except that the child is raised by ghosts rather than animals, will be directed by Henry Selick.

Outlander: stars John Hurt and Ron Perlman in a goofy yet violent tale of Vikings fending off a horde of near-invisible giant alien invaders. Sounds like an absolute 'must see' to me!

The Ghost: is a horror film based on the novel by Robert Harris now being filmed by Roman Polanski. Jim Belushi is in the cast somewhere. Something about a retired British Prime Minister & war crimes.

PROGRESS ON THE STARDANCE FILM!

From Jeanne Robinson:

Dear Honorary Stardancers,

At the moment, Jim is mid-air, on his way home. I've just posted a blog (with a photo) about his visit: < <http://stardancemovie.blogspot.com/> > Suffice it to say, it was a remarkable week. I'm feeling exhilarated and exhausted. A lot happened. The entry will fill you on our collaborative effort. Everything is moving right along.

Jim told me he'll post a new entry about his visit soon. I'm looking forward to it.

Thank you all for your continued interest and support. We truly appreciate.

Warm grateful smiles, Jeanne

[Jeanne's Blog reads:]

Here at Tottering-on-the Brink, my home, Jim's radiant light continues to remain visible even though he's currently in midflight, on his way home to his loving family.

We shared a remarkable week -- with Stardance at its centre. Not only did the screenplay progress, but Jim and I became a solid writing team. Collaboration is an intimate act of trust, respect, generosity, and faith. By the end of our first marathon session, we knew we were a solid karass, and will be able to complete the script long distance.

We've mapped out a schedule to keep us on track. Feel free to ask us questions about the work or our process, and we'll do our best to respond as time allows.



Spider spent part of the week looking over our shoulders as we worked at the kitchen table. (He took the photo that accompanies this.) A few days ago we invited him to sit down at Jim's largescreen monitor and read the work, and he says we're nailing it.

(Spider here: it's way better than I could have done. I'm dead chuffed, as they say on Coronation Street. Jim isn't just a very good screenwriter, he's compatible with Jeanne's mindset: they make a good team.)

Continued thanks to all of you who have helped make this wonderful process possible. It's gonna be great....

CONVENTIONS PREREG FOR VCON 34!

VCON 34 -- (Oct 2-4, 2009) at the Compass Point Inn, Surrey, next to the King George Skytrain Station.

AUTHOR GUEST OF HONOUR: Tanya Huff (Wizard Crystal, Blood Books, Smoke Books, other series.)

ARTIST GUEST OF HONOUR: Miles Teves (a concept/character artist/illustrator/sculptor for films as diverse as *Ironman*, *Chronicles of Riddick*, *Van Helsing*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *King Kong*, *Galaxy Quest* & numerous others – a fantastic Artist Goh!)

CONVENTION RATE: \$45 adult, \$34 student, \$23 kids. This will stay the same until just before the con, when it jumps to the at-door price. Benefits to registering now include entry in members-only contests and that warm fuzzy feeling you get from being a part of something. Make cheques payable to “VCON 34” and send to:

VCON 34 Registrar
Box 78069 Grandview RPO
Vancouver, B.C., Canada V5N 5W1

Check out the VCON 34 website at < <http://www.vcon.ca/index.htm> > for updated info.

FILTHY PRO NEWS

THE ONGOING SAGA OF PROMOTING ALYXANDRA J. SHAW'S FANTASY TRILOGY 'A STRANGE PLACE IN TIME'

By The Graeme -- her husband

(The idea is that any beginning author, or readers interested in how authors get started, will find this blow by blow on-going account of her evolution from a fan fiction author to a professional author informative and possibly even inspiring. Just be aware it didn't happen over night. Alyx has put years of hard work into this.)

The fourth quarterly report (for 2008 sales) is in from Torquere Press and the results are somewhat disappointing. Here are the totals of copies sold to date.

THE RECALLING OF JOHN ARROWSMITH

1st Quarter: 117
2nd Quarter: 39
3rd Quarter: 104
4th Quarter: 37

Total: 297

THE WHITE PALACE AWAKENS

3rd Quarter: 106
4th Quarter: 19

Total: 125

Grand Total: 422 copies of the two novels sold.

Well, not bad for an E book. Still, had hoped the upward momentum would continue. Looking at the figures, I think it's safe to assume the release of the second novel in the third quarter triggered a renewal of interest in the first novel. Presumably we can expect a similar sales boost when the 3rd novel comes out early this year.

On the other hand, sales for the 4th quarter dropped back to 2nd quarter levels. This despite numerous web interviews and other online publicity efforts. Then again, the recession/depression has hit everyone's casual spending rather hard, and may account for the decline.

One potentially hopeful sign, in the 3rd quarter the Amazon Books Kindle downloads of the first novel outsold Torquere Press 62 to 42, and in the 4th quarter 21 to 16. This may mean that Amazon Books has a much larger readership potential and a greater promise of future sales. Add to this the fact that Amazon is introducing a second generation Kindle thingie which will probably attract more customers, and the readership potential expands yet again. Further consider that hard times often lead to a greater interest in 'escape' entertainment like fantasy novels and films.

In short, still plenty of grounds for anticipating improved sales. Confidence is high.

AUTHOR HAPPENINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST

(New information highlighted in violet.)

DON DEBRANDT < <http://www.sfw.org/members/DeBrandt/index.html> >

Don's 'Cyberjunk' website has recently begun renovation. See his other website under the name 'Donn Cortez' < <http://www.donnecortez.com> > for a complete listing of books, stories, articles & comics under both names, including the mystery *'The Man Burns Tonight'*, the thriller *'The Closer'*, four volumes of the CSI MIAMI series, and his classic SF novels: *The Quicksilver Screen*, *Steeldriver*, *Timberjak*, & *V.I.*

Currently Don is returning to his roots by working on a Sci-Fi trilogy, starting with his upcoming hardcover mystery/sci-fi novel *'Lucidity'*, which is about two 'Ectives' (emotive detectives) in the near future where emotions can be read, implanted, bought, sold, and stolen. 'Lucidity' is scheduled for release in 2009 by Fivestar Press.

Lucky New York fans note that Don will be appearing at the < [New York Comicon](#) > at the Javits centre April 17-21, 2009. (Also Basil Gogos, legendary Famous Monsters of Filmland cover artist!)

DAVE DUNCAN < <http://www.daveduncan.com> >

Dave lives in Victoria, B.C. His latest books: *'The Alchemist's Apprentice'*, *'Children of Chaos'* & *'Ill Met in the Arena'*.

Dave has sold *'Speak to the Devil'*, the first book in his new swordsmen & sorcerers series *'The Brothers Magnus'*, to Liz Gorinsky at Tor Books. It will be published in 2009.

Many of Dave's books, including long out of print volumes, are available for e-download at < <http://www.ereads.com> > .

Dave writes on his website: **"The 2008 Meltdown hit the publishing business as hard as most, so I was not surprised when a book I had hoped to see come out in 2009 was put off until 2010.**

(If you must live in interesting times, keep your fingers crossed.) Prophecy has become even trickier than usual, but this is what I foresee for 2009:”

“One new book, slated for March: [The Alchemist's Pursuit](#). This is the third and last of my stories about Alfeo Zeno and Maestro Nostradamus tracking down evildoers in Renaissance Venice. For what it's worth, I think it is the best of the three, but everyone has their own taste in books.”

“ [Ill Met in the Arena](#) my standalone fantasy about the land of Aureity, should appear in the summer. I am not surprised that some fans have raved about this one and others are, at best, cool. As I said, taste in books is a very personal thing.”

WILLIAM GIBSON < <http://www.williamgibsonbooks.com> >

Bill lives in Vancouver. Check out his web site for his Q&A interview ‘Across the Border to Spook Country’. His latest book: ‘*Spook Country*’.

In his blog Gibson wrote way back in January 31st, 2003:

“Well, not that I’ve gone back and re-read them recently (or, really, ever) but I seem to be fonder of COUNT ZERO, from the first set, and IDORU from the second. COUNT ZERO because the ace cyberspace cowboy turns out to be, initially at least, a completely hapless teenage dork, and IDORU because I love the idea of a little girl from a Seattle suburb getting on the plane to Tokyo, having crazy adventures there, and coming back without anyone even having noticed.”

MATT HUGHES < <http://www.archonate.com/> >

Matt lives on Vancouver Island. The third Henghis Hapthorn novel, ‘Hespira’, will finally be out from Nightshade Books in February, 2009.

The complete Guth Bandar saga is now published as a novel titled ‘*The Commons*’ from Robert J. Sawyer Books.

On his Website Matthew writes:

“The noted sf critic Russell Letson has given [Template](#) a hell of a good review in the January *Locus*. He says, "Vanceans will catch parallels to the Demon Princes and Durdane series and (more strongly) *Trullion: Alastor 2262*, *Emphyrio*, and *Night Lamp*, but while *Template* does not venture far beyond the patterns laid down by the master, it does not feel like a mere imitation, partly because Hughes clearly *gets* Vance and the conceptual space he opens so well, and partly because he has the writerly chops to take on the challenge of echoing that supremely idiosyncratic style--not absolutely note-perfect, but close enough. I never forgot that I was reading a Vance homage, but *Template* is so well executed that I didn't care. And the novel's thematics, however indebted to its models, are strong enough to stand on their own--the title cleverly points not only to multivalent internal metaphors but to the book's relationship to its inspiration.”

PAULA JOHANSON

Paula lives on an island in British Columbia and a farm in Alberta. She has twice been nominated for an Aurora Award. Her latest book is ‘Tower in the Crooked Wood’, a young adult fantasy novel published by Bundoran Press Publishing House in November, 2008.

“Jenia is magically transported from her island tribe to become a slave under vicious rule – but only for a day and night. Jenia leaves her home to find the location of the tower to try to free the dying slaves and comes across a village with a culture very different from her own.”

Opening of first chapter:

There. If that wasn't the cursed mountain that she'd left bloody footprints on, Jenia didn't know where else under the two moons it could possibly be.

It looked familiar, at least: the cone shape slumped so the top third jutted to one side, making a shoulder. And may be if this light rain ever let up completely, she'd see other familiar signs: the dead-white trees twisted in spirals, or the small, contorted pines, or the one truly frightening hemlock which rose out of a bog like a giant's pitchfork of bone. She would know them if she ever saw them again. Her luck was turning at last - Jenia hadn't seen the soldiers following her since she crossed the strait and came to this island. And since she awoke, there had been no sound or sign of wild beasts uncomfortably near.

EILEEN KERNAGHAN < <http://www.lonelycry.ca/ek/> >

Eileen lives in the Lower Mainland area. Check out her latest books: '*Winter on the Plain of Ghosts: a Novel of Mohenjo-daro*', '*The Alchemist's Daughter*', '*The Sarsen Witch*', and '*Wild Talent: a novel of the supernatural.*'

An excerpt from 'Wild Talent':

Everywhere Alexandra looked -- at rocks, flowers, bushes, mountains -- she saw an unsettling double image. In one painting a vast deserted heath stretched away to the edge of a lake, with snow-capped peaks rising out of the mist beyond. All across the heath were slender indistinct forms that were at once trees or bushes, and at the same time *something else*. I saw her shiver a little as she went on, "Somehow they had become men, or animals, and as they looked out at me their faces were full of cunning and a dreadful malice. At that moment I felt quite terrified."

But needless to say Alexandra's curiosity overcame her fear, and she reached out to touch the picture. As she did so, M. Villemain suddenly cried out, "Be careful. You could be pulled in."

CRAWFORD KILIAN < <http://crofsblogs.typepad.com/> >

Continues to teach at Capilano College in North Vancouver. His latest books: '*Writing Science Fiction and Fantasy*' (1998), & '*Writing for the Web*' (1999). See E-address above for his blog. He is currently working on another novel, plus "a couple of nonfiction books and articles for online journals." Both of the books mentioned above are available from Self Counsel Press;
< <http://www.self-counsel.com/ca/> >

Writing in his Blog, Kilian comments:

Back in 2002, giving a workshop in Sao Paulo, I showed my students the current White House website. It was pretty dull, but it did offer a page in Spanish. Politically smart, I guess, except that the links on the Spanish page were still in English. Politics on the web was still pretty primitive.

Last year I wrote an article about the gorgeous [Barack Obama campaign website](#). Clearly, the upstart understood the web far better than any other politician on the planet.

Now, on the day of his inauguration, we have an invitation: [Welcome to the White House](#). Webwriters, take notes. Barack Obama has raised the standard.

DONNA MCMAHON < <http://www.donna-mcmahon.com/> >

Lives in Gibsons on the Sunshine Coast. She won a 2001 Aurora Award for her book reviews published in Tomorrow SF, BCSFAzine & other publications. Check out her novel '*Dance of Knives*' which is set in Vancouver in the year 2108. The sequel '*Second Childhood*' is pending publication.

Excerpt from *'Dance of Knives'* describing Vancouver's Yaletown:

After a few blocks they emerged near the False Creek waterfront beside a public waterstation--one of the last relics of the '62 earthquake, erected shortly before City Services abandoned Downtown. A line of silent, gaunt-faced people, mostly very old or very young, stood with mute resignation in the hot sun, holding bags and buckets. Despite the glare, few of them wore lenses or hats and Klale wondered how many flots got cancer.

The Bloods turned down a steep ramp onto a float lined with ramshackle boats and barges, many as small as three meters. Some were no more than crude rafts kept afloat with pieces of wood, ancient chunks of styrofoam, or empty jugs. The noahs near shore were bumping bottom. At lower tides they would be grounded, thought Klale. In some places even the floats were foundering. Pum stepped on a corner of sidewalk and plunged to her ankles in muddy sea water, jumping back with such alarm that Klale guessed she couldn't swim. Klale patted her shoulder reassuringly and received a glare for her trouble.

"I'm Canadian. I write a kinder, gentler future urban hell." – Donna.

NINA MUNTEANU < <http://sfgirl-thealiennextdoor.blogspot.com> >

Lives and teaches in Victoria, B.C. You can order her Sci-Fi novel *'Darwin's Paradox'* by Dragon Moon Press from Amazon.ca. Nina contributes frequently to her blog site.

Nina's latest book is *'The Fiction Writer: Get Published, Write Now!'* by Pixl Press with digital PDF and Print versions now available for [order and download](#).

In her blog Nina writes:

I recently signed a contract for the publication of my prequel to *Darwin's Paradox*—*Angel of Chaos*—and mailed it off to my publisher at Dragon Moon Press. As I walked home from the post office in the brisk winter wind, I reflected that this very act was something I'd dreamt about as a beginning writer: signing and mailing off that elusive contract between publisher and writer for a novel. It had so long exceeded my grasp, and here I was, having done it a few times without a second thought. Well, my thoughts were of the movie rights and foreign rights and... yes, soaring ambitions... Funny, how the reality of a dream invariably translates into a new dream to attain.

SPIDER ROBINSON < <http://www.spiderrobinson.com/index2.html> >

Spider & Jeanne live in the Lower Mainland area. See the above website for info on *'Variable Star'*, *'The Crazy Years'*, *'The Lighthouse Trilogy'* (a reissue of *'Mindkiller'*, *'Time Pressure'* and *'Lighthouse'*), *'Very Hard Choices'*, audio versions of their books, the exciting Stardance movie project, and Spider's latest podcasts.

Callahan's the game has been rediscovered! Download it free for PC from [The Joystick](#).

Spider On The Web, the FREE podcast, is updated twice a month with fresh content.

See [Spider on the Web Podcast!](#)

Most readers who've responded to *VARIABLE STAR* by Robert A. Heinlein and Spider Robinson have expressed strong desire to know what happened next. Spider is delighted to report his agent Eleanor Wood has, in the worst times in sf publishing history, sold Tor Books not just one but three sequels to *VARIABLE STAR*, to be known collectively as The Orphan Stars Trilogy. For more information, listen to [Spider On The Web #59](#).

ROBERT J. SAWYER < <http://www.sfwriter.com/> >

Robert lives in Mississauga, Ontario (but who is out here on the West Coast so often we view him as one of our own).

'*Identity Theft*' is his second & final collection of short fiction, with an overall introduction by Robert Charles Wilson and RJS's own notes on each story.

Science fiction writer **Robert J. Sawyer's** current project is the *WWW* trilogy, consisting of *Wake*, *Watch*, and *Wonder*, all about the World Wide Web gaining consciousness

Wake will be published in hardcover in April 2009 jointly by Ace Science Fiction in the US and Penguin in Canada. You can all about the publishing deal in [this entry](#) in Rob's blog.

[More about Wake](#) (including the opening chapters!)

BCSFAzine #429 states: There will be a launch party in Toronto, of course, and Rob will be doing readings and signings in other Canadian cities: including Vancouver on Monday, April 20.

Robert writes in his blog:

My friend Stephen Kotowych points out that [this article](#) in the Sunday, January 25, 2009, *New York Times* [but online since yesterday] says, "Back in 1996, [Brad] Meltzer built what was arguably the first author Web site for his first novel ..."

Poppycok, says I! My website has been online since Wednesday, June 28, 1995. I've never claimed it was the first author website, but it's often referred to as the first science-fiction author website (and Reuters called it that many years ago in an article).

BCSFAzine #429 also quoted the CBC: A leading light in science fiction is heading to Saskatoon's light source synchrotron. Acclaimed Canadian sci-fi author Robert J. Sawyer will be the first ever writer-in-residence at the massive scientific facility.... As part of his residency, Sawyer will make himself available to the public as a resource and mentor.

ALYX J. SHAW < <http://alyx.wozupdoc.net/> >

(See also her live journal at < <http://alyx-j-shaw.livejournal.com/> >)

Lives in Surrey. Her novels *The Recalling of John Arrowsmith* & *The White Palace Awakens* (Books One and Two of her trilogy '*A Strange Place in Time*'), are available from online publisher Torquere Press: < http://torquerebooks.com/zencart/index.php?main_page=index > in electronic download PDF format for **only \$5.95 US**.

Book one is also available in Kindle electronic book download at Amazon Books for \$4.99, for which see: < <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/B0019VTTFG/shelfari-20> >

'*The Recalling of John Arrowsmith*' (Book One of her trilogy) is available in hard cover for \$150 US (red Japanese book silk cover, French-style sewn on cord binding) by mail order from Doppelganger Press: < <http://doppelgangerpress.com/> > and also book two, '*The White Palace Awakens*' for \$260 US (illustrations in the second volume are by Eveline Koeppen of Leipzig, Germany, with front piece by S. H. Desjardins. quarter bound in Asahi crimson Japanese silk book cloth and handmade pastepaper using a French groove style binding structure).

LISA SMEDMAN < <http://www.lisamedman.topcities.com/> >

Lisa lives in Richmond, B.C. with her wife, their son, four cats, and two pugs. Her latest novels (on the 'Lady Penitent Trilogy'): Book 1 '*Sacrifice of the Widow*', Book 2 '*Storm of the Dead*', and Book 3 '*Ascendancy of the Last*'.

Lisa has also had a number of short science fiction and fantasy stories published in various magazines and anthologies, has designed a number of adventures and written short fiction for the Advanced Dungeons & Dragon roleplaying game's Ravenloft and Dark Sun lines, and also designed

gaming products for Star Wars, Indiana Jones, Cyberpunk, Immortal, Shatterzone, Millennium's End, and Deadlands.

After working for more than 20 years as a journalist, Lisa now splits her week between her job as an editor at the [Vancouver Courier](#), a weekly newspaper (for which she writes the column *History's Lens*) and writing fiction.

'*Vancouver - Stories of a City*,' a volume by Lisa Smedman now available from the *Vancouver Courier* (\$44.95), "expands upon a 12-part series of cover stories. In this award-winning series, journalist Lisa Smedman explores the history of our city, neighbourhood by neighbourhood. More than 300 pages long and packed with historic photos, maps and illustrations."

C. JUNE WOLF < <http://cjunewolfdn.blogspot.com/> >

June lives in Vancouver, B.C. Her latest book is '*Finding Creatures And Other Stories*' published by Wattle & Daub. White Dwarf Books writes:

"Literary, science fictional, slipstream, and fantastic—this medley of stories is grounded in the present day, weaving backward to the life of Saint Francis, and forward to a time when Earth is a memory, and new humans are finding their place among the stars."

"Wolf's characters grapple with personal integrity and connection with others, with the imperatives to abandon fear and hate and to question cherished beliefs. A Haitian street kid with a mercurial coin, a skid-row waitress with a passion for paleontology, and aliens inadvertently trapped in sculptures by Henry Moore, journey side by side with a northern Native man, who confronts harsh memories as he searches for a place to bury a dead spaceman, and two teenagers who build an old-style science-fiction machine with a very modern purpose."

NOTE: Most of the novels mentioned above are available at **White Dwarf Books**, 3715 West 10th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V6R 2G5. Phone (604) 228 – 8223.
E-address: < whitedwarf@deadwrite.com > Web site < <http://www.deadwrite.com> >

LETTERS OF COMMENT

(Note that my comments are in red.)

(Further note you can send letters of comment to me at < rgraeme@shaw.ca >)

From: PAUL JOHNSTON December 29th, 2009

Well, once I go through it again (it's pretty massive) I'll see if there's anything anyone would be interested in beyond what I told you...

It's mostly personal items...like receipts and hotel stationary and the like, but there might be something of interest in there if I packaged it right (Maybe just the story of finding it with some key descriptions?)...Weird stuff is included - like promo material for city's trying to attract Worldcon, Hugo ballots and Sam's attendee badges...

Seems like Sam McCoy had a table selling books and mags at many cons...pictures of Sam do show up in the Pittcon items (there's a 170 photo mag sent out to attendees back then along with a five page article description/summary of Pittcon that perhaps folks might find entertaining to read (like your Torcon account). I see folks selling this photo mag on ebay, but without the second, Photo "key" telling you who are in the photos - Sam saved it thank god). And a few letters he wrote to guys like

Heinlein...and the like. I might be able to string something together of interest...I'll look for cool Torcon stuff...

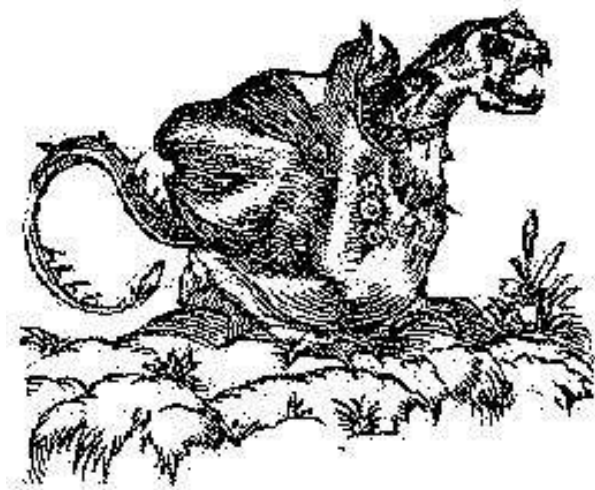
I'm still envious. What a discovery! I look forward to whatever you can share with us.

I'm hoping Sam is still with us (If I calculate from his university transcript - also included - I'd say he's in his mid-80s), though this material does strike me as something of an estate sale...I believe he did live in London...though Ottawa first, then London.

..ianj

From: AL BETZ, January 6th 2009

Hello Graeme:



VCON IV was a personal low point for me. It wasn't Robert Silverberg's announcement. It was the fact that all the microphones I had were totally unsuitable for the purpose. I began collecting proper mics to use at VCON and had much better results from then on..

Forry Ackerman was, indeed, prevented from attending VCON 15 by health problems. As I recall he had agreed to accept an Elron for inventing the term "Sci-Fi."

I would have loved to be present. Presumably he would have given us the full story on his inspiration. As I understand it, it goes something like this (my Canfancylopedia entry): SCI-FI - stands for 'Science Fiction'. The term 'Sci-Fi' (or sci-fi) was coined by Forrest J. Ackerman in 1955 while driving down a California freeway listening to his car radio. The logic pattern went something like this: car radio - kind of tinny - too bad it's not a high fidelity setup - high fidelity = Hi-Fi = high quality listening, whereas high quality reading must = Sci-Fi!

Ackerman, one of the most prominent and well known fans of the 1930s, 40s & 50s, began to promote this concept immediately, with less than satisfactory results. As Dick Enay put it in his 1959 'Fancylopedia 2': "(Ackerman) 4e is trying to popularize this expression as an equivalent for stf, i e a contraction for science-fuction. So far it has attached chiefly to several professional movie-magazines and other Hollywood level stuff." This is a slightly condescending dig at Ackerman's recently acquired job as editor of James Warren's FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND in which 'Sci-Fi' was heavily promoted. Alas, the concept of 'Sci-Fi', meant to imply that science fiction literature (or science fiction anything) was high quality came to be associated with a magazine aimed at 14 year olds. Despite Ackerman's best efforts, 'Sci-Fi' came to be considered, by the more serious fans of stf, a juvenile term only the ignorant use.

Pity, because I quite like it myself. Say "stf" to anyone, and they don't know what you are talking about (it's a contraction for 'Scientifiction', the ancestral term for what later became known as 'science fiction'). But say 'Sci-Fi' and *everyone* knows what you're talking about, it's so obvious. Consequently the term is in widespread use by critics, journalists, movie reviewers, advertisers, many fans, etc but, if only because of Sturgeon's law ("90% of science fiction is

crap, but then 90% of everything is crap."), it is still often associated with poor quality popular media. Pity.

When our GoH Sam Moskowitz arrived, one of the first things he said to me was "can I please be reimbursed for my ticket now?" I found our treasurer and the matter was quickly resolved.

I believe Moskowitz had quite the reputation for being very 'practical.'

Alan R. Betz

From: LLOYD PENNEY, January 15th, 2009

Dear Graeme:

I didn't think I'd get to WCSFAzine 17 so quickly...the words are flying off my fingertips. Or, it's something else of the fingertips, usually...



I may have one or two Randy Reichart zines in my collection. What I need is a spare week or two, with nothing to do, and archive all my zines. As if that spare time will ever happen...

I think we've said it all about losing Forry Ackerman. Not that we shouldn't go on, but that if we did, we might sound maudlin. Forry's blazed the trail, and it's time for us to get moving, and do him proud.

I think I'll probably continue my article about him in my SPACE CADET. After all, he was a fannish phenomenon in his own right, and well worth a retrospective.

Well, you got my vote for Fan Organizational...the fanned for Warp is Cathy Palmer-Lister. And bless your heart for listing me for Fan Other. I think I know what may happen for Fan (Organizational), though...

Let's hope the fanzine category declares a winner this time!

Taral knew Henry Argasinski far better than I did...I believe that he was the chairman of my first convention ever, Erincon 4 held at Erindale College, now the University of Toronto at Mississauga. He was the one who thought that if they cut down on the number of flyers they printed, they'd save money. Well, he was right, but that also made sure that very few people actually knew about the convention. I

wouldn't have made it there if Yvonne hadn't told me it was on.

Argasinski sounds like the kind of person who gets carried away with ideas but tends to ignore the reality of the actual work involved in carrying out those ideas.

I wish we had a better record of the Casper nominees of each of the years it was called the Caspers. I think Torus received several Casper nominations, but never won. I'd like full details, if they were available.

Should be on the web somewhere...

If anyone can make a Forbidden Planet remake interesting, it's James Cameron. Don't let us down, now...and, Monsters vs. Aliens looks like it could be fun. I've seen a few clips of it on www.cartoonbrew.com.

I'm hoping the Cameron trilogy of Forbidden Planet films will either be VERY good or VERY bad. Only mediocrity would disappoint me.

I've seen on io9.com, of all places, that Rob Sawyer will be the SF writer-in-residence when the big cyclotron in Saskatchewan goes on line. Unique...it will be interesting to see what spin (sorry) Rob put on it.

To respond to Steve Green, I find that when journalists don't quite understand what it is they're reporting on, rather than confess their ignorance, they make fun of it to gain superiority in their own eyes. Very human trait, I'm afraid. They also cater to the editor who wants something light and amusing for one of the back pages, so the fit is perfect. The page is filled, and once again, let's laugh at the Trekkies. My work situation...I am currently working contract-free...they have neglected to offer me an extension, but as long as I can go in and be paid for my attendance and work, I can't complain.

Still keeping my fingers crossed you'll land a permanent job soonest.

I have found out that with the current level of interest in Doctor Who, the local Whofen at DWIN will be staging Who Party 14, probably downtown in the fall. More info as it comes about.

All done...I'd better get on with other things, but off it goes to you and on to my LJ. Take care, stay warm...we've been having Winnipeg-style winter weather, at -20C. Bye for now...



Yours, Lloyd Penney.

From: DAVE HAREN, January 21st, 2008

Esteemed Editor,

Great issue.

I went looking for the movie you reviewed. As a staunch admirer of Ed Wood, I also seek out truly bad movies to inflict on friends and family at random. I haven't found a copy yet but now that I know it exists it cannot escape for long.

My desire to see ALL the classic bad films presents me with a life-long quest.

I sensed an interesting cognitive thread as well.



1) it seemed overly convoluted to not just come out and say Gordon Dickson was a renaissance man who wished to drag us out of the dark ages. Dragging in the innocent Machiavelli was excessive.

2) Silverberg and Heinlein both made the mistake of thinking fans had become adults with predictable results. If the audience is in love with materials written for teens it is a mistake to try to wean them away.

(Personally I think crusades to elevate have dragged the level of SF into a rarefied atmosphere where it lies gasping like a fish out of water. Silverberg's enormous output of storytelling was better than any carefully crafted, highly polished "literature" could ever be.)

I prefer SF which stirs my sense of wonder. 'High' SF is too close to mainstream to have any effect on me at all.

I recall trying to make some sense of RE Howards ethnic group descriptions and finally it

dawned on me that what he was doing was tossing out a set of poetic buzzwords without rational content just to keep the action flowing. When caught in the flow, it didn't matter whether the purebred noble Picts of one story were the degenerate half-humans of another. The important stuff was quivering thews, swinging broadswords, beautiful maidens and a fast paced narrative that never let you pause to try to make sense of it.

Good point.

It is OK to try and work in a few concepts, some novelty, and personal ideas felt to be of great worth in a story, but drowning the reader who bought it to get into a story with those is fatal to a writers work.

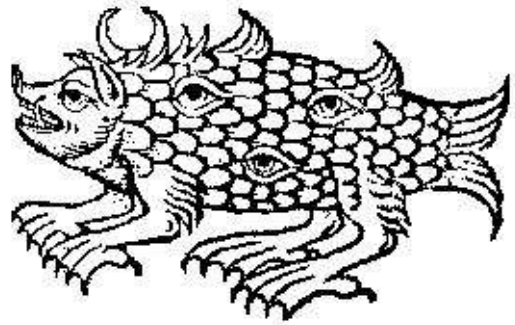
Another good point. I totally agree.

Courting the art snobbling class of literati who have despised anything that makes humanity seem dynamic and capable of great deeds after they have looked down their nose SF at every opportunity for millenia also seems like a bad idea.

“art snobbling class” ... I like that! Could become a classic fannish term!

Academe has come up with some truly bizarre stuff, an example is the exclamations of horror that HP Lovecraft was a racist, when the entire country was just as racist as HP and in most cases they were worse. The bland assumption that an artist should have risen above by some magic powers denied to his fellow man seemed hilarious to me.

Exactly! HP reflected the average standard of the day (when approximately 25% of white men belonged to the Ku Klux Klan – hence their infamous march in Washington.) What counts is his growing anti-racist sentiment as he aged. By the end he was very liberal and ahead of his time. He rose above his environment, so to speak.



In the meantime I am wallowing in the ancient Astoundings, reading stories written to entertain, with mad scientists nutty as three pound fruitcakes making demagogic speeches no actor could deliver with a straight face.

Nowadays we have politicians who do that.

On a more Canadian note: Cory Doctorows USC Class is available on MP3s at www.archive.org

It is titled PWNed and is USC 499 COMM, well worth a listen if you have any involvement with copyrights, intellectual property issues, freedom of information or DRM issues. it takes awhile to go through the whole thing but it is worth it just for the chance to hear about what is involved in the various issues. A wide ranging and timely look at a lot of things which can be taken at leisure, since you don't need a grade and the teacher is ducking industries apples and needs none from the audience.

Warm Regards Dave Haren

INFORMATION RESOURCE!

Permanent: Upcoming Conventions / Local Clubs

Rotating: Canadian Sci-Fi Facebook Sites

Next Month: Canadian Sci-Fi Web Sites of Interest.

UPCOMING CONVENTIONS

SOURCES: < <http://www.locusmag.com/Conventions.html> > & < <http://www.sfnorthwest.org/northwestcons.html#cons> >

RADCON 5A_ RELAXACON FEB 13-15, 2009 PASCO, WA: < <http://www.radcon.org/news.php> >

POTLATCH 18 GENERAL/LITERARY SF FEB 27 - MAR 1, 2009 SUNNYVALE, CALIFORNIA:
< <http://www.potlatch-sf.org/> >

DAK-KON XIV GAMING FEB 28 - MAR 2, 2009 COURTENAY, BC:

< <http://members.axion.net/~murdock/tourney.html> >

CORFLU ZED -- CORFLU 26 *FANZINE FANDOM* MAR 13-15, 2009 SEATTLE, WA:

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

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE FANTASTIC IN ARTS *ACADEMIC* MAR 18-22, 2009 ORLANDO, FLORIDA: < <http://www.iafa.org/> >

STARGATE SG-1/ATLANTIS *MEDIA* APR 2-4, 2009 BURNABY, B.C.

< <http://www.creationent.com/cal/sgvan.htm> >

EMERALD CITY COMICON *COMICS* APR 4-5, 2009 SEATTLE, WA:

< <http://www.emeraldcitycomicon.com/> >

NORWESCON 32 *MAJOR REGIONAL SF CON* APR 9-12, 2009 SEATAC, WA:

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

SAKURACON 2009 *ANIME* APR 10-12, 2009 SEATTLE, WA: < <http://www.sakuracon.org/> >

CALGARY COMICS & ENTERTAINMENT EXPO *COMICS* APR 25-26, 2009 CALGARY, ALBERTA: < <http://www.calgaryexpo.com/> >

2009 EATON SF CONFERENCE *ACADEMIC* APR 30 – MAY 3, 2009 RIVERSIDE, CA:

< <http://eatonconference.ucr.edu/> >

WORLD HORROR CON 2009 *HORROR* APR 30 – MAY 3, 2009 WINNIPEG, MANITOBA:

< <http://www.whc2009.org/> >

ZOMPIRE *UNDEAD FILM FESTIVAL* MAY 15-17, 2009 PORTLAND, OREGON:

< <http://www.zompire.com> >

CONCOMCON 16 *CON RUNNERS CON* JUN 5-7, 2009 SURREY, B.C. < <http://www.swoc.org/ccubed/> >

ANIME EVOLUTION *ANIME* JUN 12-14, 2009 VANCOUVER, B.C. < <http://www.animeevolution.com/> >

FIESTACON / WESTERCON 62 *MAJOR REGIONAL SF CON* JUL 2-5, 2009 TEMPE, AZ:

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

SPOCON *GENERAL SF* JUL 31 – AUG 2, 2009 SPOKANE, WA: < <http://www.spocon2009.com> >

ANTICIPATION (WORLDCON 67) *WORLDCON* AUG 6-10, 2009 MONTREAL, QUEBEC:

< www.anticipationsf.ca >

VCON 34 *GENERAL SF* OCT 2-4, 2009 SURREY, B.C. < <http://www.vcon.ca/index.htm> >

WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION *FANTASY* OCT 29 – NOV 1, 2009 SAN JOSE, CA:

< <http://www.worldfantasy2009.org/> >

LOCAL CLUBS

B.C. BROWNCOATS (FOUNDED APRIL 2004, FIREFLY & SERENITY FANS):

< <http://www.browncoats.ca/> >

B.C. RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL: < <http://www.bcrenfest.com> >

B.C.S.F.A. – THE BRITISH COLUMBIA SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION:

Founded 29th January, 1970. **Membership is now free!** BCSFA holds a monthly social gathering at the home of the Editor, a book discussion on a monthly basis at the ‘Our Town Café’, and offers free

monthly on-line issues of BCSFAzine (or, if you have no computer access, a paper version at cost, availability severely limited).

ADDRESS:

BCSFAZINE EDITOR (submissions, letters of comment, trades) – BCSFAzine, c/o Garth Spencer, P.O. Box 74122, Hillcrest Park, 4101 Main Street, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V5V 3P0.

Email < garthspencer@shaw.ca >

BOOK DISCUSSION: Thursday February 12 @ 7pm now relocated to the "The Grind" Gallery and Coffee Shop, 4124 Main Street, Vancouver. The topic book will be *'Lord Valentine's Castle'* by Robert Silverberg.

ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Friday February 13 – See Garth at Fred or send to Editor's Address above.

BCSFA MEETING/PARTY: Saturday February 14 @ 7 pm at Garth Spencer's place, 82 East 40th Avenue (at Main), Vancouver, B.C. Phone him at (604) 325-7314 for directions. (It's a dog's-leg or knight's move from main street and 41st Avenue.)

BCSFAzine PRODUCTION: Friday February 27 from 8:00 pm -- See Garth at FRED for your paper copy. Trying to reduce the number of paper copies as much as possible.

BCSFA YAHOO DISCUSSION GROUP: < http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc_scifi_assc/ >

B.I.F.F. MEETINGS (Burrard Inlet Fan Fellowship): – Every Friday (except long weekends & VCON weekend) @ 6:30 PM till closing time (officially 9:00 pm). A weekly social meeting for SF fans, founded June 11th, 2005. Held at The Eighties Restaurant, 110 West 14th Street (at Lonsdale) in North Vancouver: < <http://biff.realityfree.ca/> >

The B.I.F.F. discussion forum can be found at: < <http://arowlf.ning.com/group/biff> >

FANCOUVER: VANCOUVER SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY MEETUP:

< <http://scifi.meetup.com/278/> >

F.R.E.D. MEETINGS – Every Friday @ 8:00 PM. Weekly social meeting for SF fans, founded May 3rd, 1979. Usually held at Boston Pizza, 1333 West Broadway @ Hemlock (2 blocks East of Granville), Vancouver.

For details & info: < <http://www.facebook.com/group.php> > or Ryan Hawe @ < luxdoprime@yahoo.com >

MONSTER ATTACK TEAM CANADA:

< <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MonsterAttackTeamCanada/?yguid=8788> >

MONSTER FIGHTERS ONLINE CLUB (MATC):

< <http://movies.groups.yahoo.com/group/MonsterFighters> >

THE 13TH COLONY – VANCOUVER'S BATTLESTAR GALACTICA FAN CLUB:

< <http://13thcolony...> >

USS MAJESTIC NCC-78601 (REGION 10 STARFLEET -- VICTORIA):

< <http://www.uss-majestic.org/> >

VANCOUVER DOCTOR WHO MEETUP GROUP: < <http://drwho.meetup.com/115/> >

VANCOUVER FIREFLY/SERENITY MEETUP GROUP:

< <http://firefly.meetup.com/12/> >

CANADIAN SCI-FI FACEBOOK SITES

B.I.F.F. (BURRARD INLET FAN FELLOWSHIP):

< <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=8682038569> >

CANADIAN FANDOM: < <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=3198365242> >

CANADIAN UNITY FAN FUND (CUFF): < <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=6119342503> >

F.R.E.D. (VANCOUVER SCI-FI WEEKLY MEETING):
< <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2351668529> >

MONTREAL FANDOM: < <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=3433145295> >

OTTAWA FANDOM: < <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=3254325206> >

SCI-FI ON THE ROCK (NEWFOUNDLAND CONVENTION):
< <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=4107298179> >

VANCOUVER FANDOM: < <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2399759573> >

VCON (ANNUAL VANCOUVER SWCI-FI CONVENTION):
< <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2315972840> >

COLOPHON

WCSFAzine Issue # 18, February 2009, Volume 3, Number 2, Whole number 18, is the monthly E-zine of the West Coast Science Fiction Association (founded 1993), a registered society with the general mandate of promoting Science Fiction and the specific focus of sponsoring the annual VCON Science Fiction Convention (founded 1971).

Anyone who is a paid member of VCON 33 or who has paid a membership fee of \$5.00 to WCSFA is a member of WCSFA till noon, Friday, October 3rd 2009 (when VCON 34 registration opens). No other criteria applies. Said membership involves voting privileges at WCSFA meetings.

Current Executive of WCSFA (effective October 21st 2008 Annual General Meeting):

PRESIDENT: *Danielle Stephens.*
VICE PRESIDENT: *Palle Hoffstein.*
TREASURER: *Tatina Lee.*
SECRETARY: *Keith Lim*
VCON 34 CHAIR-- *Danielle Stephens.*
ARCHIVIST: *R. Graeme Cameron.*
MEMBER-AT-LARGE: *Deej Barens.*
MEMBER-AT-LARGE: *Garth Spencer.*

Since anyone can download WCSFAzine, the act of reading WCSFAzine does not constitute membership in WCSFA or grant voting privileges in WCSFA. Therefore you don't have to worry about WCSFA policies, debates, finances, decisions, etc. Unless you want to. Active members always welcome. Currently, easiest way to join WCSFA is to attend VCON 33. See info page

WCSFA Website: < <http://www.user.dccnet.com/clintbudd/WCSFA/> >

WCSFAzine *IS* a fannish E-zine publication sponsored by WCSFA to promote and celebrate every and all aspects of the Science Fiction Community on the West Coast of Canada.

You can download the latest issue (and past issues) from < <http://efanzines.com> > or contact the Editor at: < rgraeme@shaw.ca > and ask me to email you a PDF version.

WCSFAzine is not intended to be an information newswire service, or an industry promotional outlet, but rather an eclectic ongoing anthology of bits and pieces of nifty rumours and misinformation as viewed through a fannish lens. You can expect the focus to be on the West Coast, but with a peripheral vision including the entire world of fandom. Anticipate info on upcoming books, fannish events, local clubs and conventions, film reviews, short essays, weird cover art, spin doctor publicity announcements, peculiar speculations and astounding bits of trivia to put you in touch with your fannish heritage.

Anyone (even non-members) may submit short articles, mini-essays, letters of comment, art fillers (small pieces of art) and/or cover art to the Editor at:

R.G. Cameron, Apt 72G – 13315 104th Ave, Surrey, B.C., V3T 1V5.

Or: < rgraeme@shaw.ca >

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