

# BCSFAzine #343

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**The monthly newsletter of  
the British Columbia Science Fiction Association**

*Something to interest everyone!*

Vol. 29 No. 12 \* Dec. 2001

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**HARRY POTTER AND THE SCIENCE FICTION FAN \* DITTO 15 IN T.O. \***

**CANADIAN UNITY FAN FUND, STARBURST AWARDS**

*\* you may also find \**

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**MAN BITES DOG \* ISLAMIC  
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AGAINST GEORGE PUIL \*  
GARTH DECLARES WAR  
AGAINST GREENLAND \*  
ANTARCTICA DECLARES  
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BRITNEY SPEARS; POPE  
SAYS SHE'S ANTICHRIST \*  
SANTA CLAUS EXPOSED AS  
A FRANCHISE \*  
JEAN CHRETIEN  
LEGISLATES P = 3**

## BCSFazine

*Something to offend interest everyone!*

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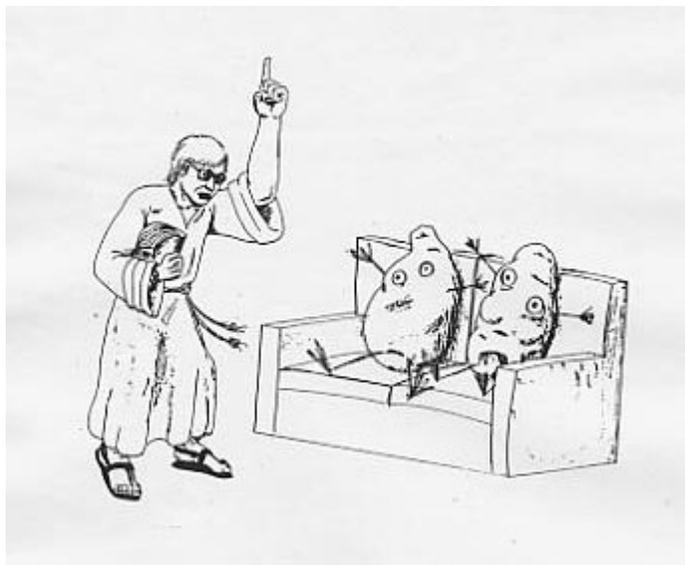
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## Art Credits

Inside Cover and page 2 ..... Garth Spencer

page 14..... Jessica Amanda Salmonson



# Plain Speaking

When you enter a group such as science fiction fandom, your first impressions may colour all your impressions ever after. These days, a fan who enters a gaming, anime, comics, Trek or other media group could easily think that's all there is to fandom. It isn't anyone's job, particularly, to say otherwise.

I have been told that fans in other fandoms can come across as exclusionary, if only because fanzine fans and fannish fans keep using a jargon that other fans may not know. I have been told that BCSFAns specifically have been snotty and snobbish to local mediafans in the past, and that now we've got a reputation around the Northwest to live down. (Sorry, Steve, but that's the way things are. I just now got

the word myself!)

We take a while, even the best of us, to get over first impressions. There was a kafuffle once in these pages because our Fearless Leader unthinkingly, and quite innocently, identified "fandom" with "fanzine fandom" (for the purposes of the Canadian Unity Fan Fund). This, in a time when 80% of fans don't know fanzines from waste paper; but this is the kind of mistake that I, or that Elder Fan Robert Runte could naturally make.

You may or may not run across "fandom guides", like the classic Neofan Guide first produced by Wilson "Bob" Tucker, or Robert Runte's NCF Guide to Science

*continued on page 3*

## CORRECTIONS

There are several ways I have goofed in the last few issues.

Those of you frustrated in trying to contact Taral Wayne, to obtain some of his excellent art and graphic novels, should contact him at **245** Dunn Avenue #2111, Toronto, ON M6K 1S6 (taralwayne@3web.net).

Those of you frustrated in trying to contact Colin Upton, to obtain some of his outstanding works, should contact him at #2 - 125 15th Ave. E., Vancouver, BC V5T 2P6 (cupton@planeteeer.com).

I could and should have corrected a point of information in last issue's book reviews. As Donna McMahon emailed to any and all BCSFA members in October,

*I wrote: VENTUS is another of the novels that made the shortlist for the Sunburst Awards this year.*

*Oops. Untrue. I was wrong. ... Here's the real shortlist:*

*BEFORE WINGS by Beth Goobie*

*MIDNIGHT ROBBER by Nalo*

*Hopkinson*

*LORD OF EMPERORS by Guy Gavriel*

*Kay*

*THE BLACK CHALICE by Marie*

*Jakober*

*MONKEY BEACH by Eden Robinson*

*GALVESTON by Sean Stewart*

*Donna McMahon <mcmahon-@home.com>*

*29 Oct 2001*

## Letters of Comment

Re: Not seeing news for you in BCSFAzine  
 "Andrew I. Porter"  
 <SF\_CHRONICLE@compuserve.com> Nov.  
 11/01

Dear Garth: I think.....

rrr mmph gerasdfc a'jf cawe....djgo sej 'xw4  
 tet e t5]t.ke]g gw445414 sgnr[otj erg e[tj  
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And that's my honest opinion!

Lloyd Penney, November 9, 2001

Thank you for a pdfed BCSFAzine 342. It's the beginning of a busy weekend, so time will probably be short, so this loc might be, too. I'll see what I can do here.

The club is once again suffering from member apathy. I think it's human nature to take for granted anything that's a regular part of your life, so perhaps there's the attitude that the club will be there, when I have the time for it, and this is exactly when it could slip away to your surprise and regret. If the club's activities are lacking attendance, perhaps the membership can tell the club executive if the club needs new activities, and if they could suggest fresh ideas. I guess I've been a broken record, but I have to say it again, only the membership can save the club through participation, instead of sitting back and demanding that the club entertain them. Perhaps my letter in this issue addressed other problems for clubs, namely dwindling numbers and other interests. There is sometimes truth to the rumour, at least that's what it says in the dictionary.

The World Fantasy Convention took place November 1-4 at the Delta Centre-Ville in Montréal, with attendance of about 500, mostly all professional fantasy, horror and



science fiction writers. Late last year, Yvonne and I volunteered to run the green room for the senior committee, and along the way, we did some proofreading for the great CD-ROM that came with the programme book, and we also printed up all the tabletop name plates for the panelists. We knew that such an event is not a convention as we know it, but is actually a professional conference for writers, we enjoyed meeting the authors we did, we had a good time with lots of friends and familiar faces, and we also got a chance to explore some of Montréal through the subway, and we attended opening night of *Monsters, Inc.* Marvellous, fun movie, gotta see it if you're a fan of animation, and it has a very imaginative chase sequence. At the end of the convention, we heard lots of kudos for the committee; most said the whole programme was well-organized, and ran smoothly. Next year's WFC will take place in Minneapolis.

*Parsec Magazine* is a neat little magazine produced by Chris Kreijlgaard out of Sudbury, Ontario. The magazine caters to all interests in science fiction, but does put an emphasis on media SF, animé, comics and gaming. If my interests were more in that vein, I might subscribe to it. However, I do talk to Chris at various conventions here. *Parsec* is also distributed in some parts of the United States, and in New Zealand.

Garth...for the results of who won the World Fantasy Awards, check out the website [www.2001worldfantasyconvention.com](http://www.2001worldfantasyconvention.com), and look for the link to the award winners. They should be up by now.

# SOME WORDS FROM OUR ADVERTISERS

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*continued from page 1*

Fiction and Fandom, which is now online. It took me a while to realize that the fannish glossaries in these guides were a bit ... um ... dated. More related to fanzine fandom, that is, than contemporary fandom. A lot of fannish jargon has fallen out of general use, and a lot has changed in meaning; I notice that among our trades, the Denver Area SF Association uses "dead dog" to mean their regular house parties. This might have been an honest misunderstanding or a conscious relabeling; I don't know.

All of the foregoing merely demonstrates a couple of facts of life:

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- a community may be described as a set of people in regular enough contact to share the same terms of reference;
- fandom is not one community anymore, if indeed it ever was. We don't all have the same terms of reference.

Contemporary fandom is a number of different small leisure-interest groups – and not even a collection of such groups, except at conventions. Contemporary fan groups are not in regular communication with each other.

I suggest that this situation has some drawbacks for us.

*continued on page 11*

# ~~NUDE PUBLIC GROUP BONDAGE I MEAN,~~ UPCOMING EVENTS & FAN NEWS

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR CLUB

**Translink:** telephone 604-953-3333, or see URL [www.translink.bc.ca](http://www.translink.bc.ca) for the best route to get where you're going ...

**F.R.E.D. (Forget Reality Enjoy Drinking)** keeps on happening from 8:00 to 11:00 p.m. at the Burrard Motor Inn, 1100 Burrard Street, in downtown Vancouver. SEE the weekly gathering of BCSFans, and Other Local Fans, joining us for conversation and relaxation! PLAY the incredible furnished pool table! DRINK an assortment of beverages (including soft drinks and hot chocolate)! Only limited supplies of food after 7:30, so Steve Forty, Official Greeter, invites people to come at 6:00 or 7:00 and join him for dinner. (WARNING: limited to those 19 or older.)

**DIRECTIONS:** The Burrard Motor Inn is located three (3) blocks west of Granville, one (1) block north of Davie, six (6) blocks south (uphill) of the Burrard Skytrain Station. A variety of bus routes run nearby, including the #22 Knight/Macdonald along Burrard Street.

**NOTE:** *On the Fridays before long weekends*, FRED moves to the Bosman's Motor Hotel lounge, at 1060 Howe Street (two [2] blocks east and one half [1/2] block north of the Burrard Motor Inn). Bosman's has a nice selection of food and drinks; their restaurant closes at 8:00 p.m., however, so come early to eat.

**The Burrard Motor Inn will be closed December 21 and 28 at 8:00 p.m. - FRED will probably be at Bosman's on those dates.**

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## NOVEMBER 2001

**Fri. Nov. 30: V-Con Society GENERAL Meeting at FRED.** Be there or be out of the loop! Agenda: mainly OK'ing an upcoming VCon 27 bid for October 2002.

## DECEMBER

**Sat. Dec 8<sup>th</sup>: beginning 7:00 pm - FREFF** (Second Saturday Feeding Frenzy, the monthly dinner social) at the Alto Douro Portuguese restaurant at 2141 Kingsway in Vancouver (604-438-9344). Hosted by Doug Finnerty. Good food & good conversation guaranteed. The cross street (Gladstone) is between Victoria Drive and Nanaimo Street. Both the #19 (Kingsway/Metrotown) and #25 (Brentwood Mall/UBC) buses will take you there.

### **Sat. Dec. 15: Annual BCSFA Christmas Dinner and Christmas Party**

**5:00 p.m.: Dinner** at Nova Buffet Restaurant, #200 (second level), 8040 Garden City, Richmond. Nearest cross-street is Blundell Road. Chinese food, including a vegetarian selection. Cost is \$13 per adult, half-price for children under 10. No reservation or advance payment necessary. A large restaurant; should have space for all. Unfortunately not wheelchair-accessible - stairs only, no elevator.

**BUSES:** Take the 98 B-Line; transfer at the Richmond Centre exchange to the #401 Garden City, departing Bay 2 at 4:51 p.m.; arrives at Garden City & Blundell at 4:56 p.m., and the restaurant is right there.

**7:00 p.m. approx.: Party** at the home of Philip Freeman and Kathleen Moore-Freeman, 7064 No. 1 Road, Richmond. A fairly wheelchair-accessible home, with driveway space for six cars. There are two children and one rabbit, if you have any allergies. Munchies, hot chocolate, tea, instant coffee will be provided; bring your own booze, or whatever else you like to drink. Feel free to bring your own music CD's and audio cassettes, SF movie soundtracks, alternative Xmas music, etc. We're going to have a

*continued on page 6*

# FANZINES

by Ted White

Fanzines are a basic part of science fiction fandom, having been in existence as long as fandom itself – the past 70 years. Fanzines are a reflection of many fans' interest in the printed word and amateur publishing. The publication you are reading this in is a fanzine, but a specialized one. A variety of other fanzines are also available – many of them by request – and this column will cover some of them each issue.

All fanzines are published as a hobby and lose money. Their editors appreciate money to defray their expenses and sometimes list single-copy or subscription prices, but they appreciate even more your written response – a Letter of Comment, or LoC. Feedback – better known in fandom as “egoboo” – is what fanzine publishing is all about.

Check out the fanzine below and broaden your participation in fandom.

::

*ARGENTUS* (Steven H Silver, 707 Sapling Lane, Deerfield, IL 60015-3969; e-mail to [shsilver@sfsite.com](mailto:shsilver@sfsite.com); available for \$3.00 or “the usual” – letters of comment, contributions of material or fanzines sent in trade)

Steven H (no period) Silver is a young up-and-comer who has, he tells us, a three-book contract (for anthologies of authors' first stories) with DAW Books, and who has campaigned vigorously for a Fan Writer Hugo for a couple of years now. He started planning *Argentus* #1 more than a year ago, originally hoping to publish it in 2000 and then scheduling it for May, 2001. It finally appeared in late September.

“Initially, I had viewed *Argentus* as having a specific theme: ‘Origins, Beginnings and Geneses,’ as it was my first issue,” Silver tells us in his editorial, “The Mine.” “This theme quickly fell by the wayside as I decided to get articles which were interesting in and of themselves, rather than because they fit a specific theme. The only article which survives from that period is Pat Sayre McCoy’s memoir of her first professional sale [“Winter Roses’ Bloom”] ... The only theme remaining in this issue is the final, mock section, which is made up of several reviews of science fiction films. I commissioned film reviewers to select a science fiction novel or story which they would like to see made into a movie. They could cast and staff the film however they chose, giving it the type of budget they wanted and then write a review of the final product. None of these films has been made, nor are plans in the works to make these specific films. I hope you enjoy their efforts.”

What Silver has produced for *Argentus*' maiden voyage is a rather earnest attempt at the sort of “sercon” fanzine better exemplified by *Nova Express*. The lead article is David Truesdale’s “Thoughts on the State of Short Science Fiction,” which turns out to be only part one of an extended series and deals, somewhat unsatisfactorily, with the present state of the surviving prozines. Pat McCoy’s piece describes, a bit breathlessly, how she came up with and sold her first story. Rich Horton describes what it was like to be a contestant on Who Wants to be a Millionaire. Michael A. Andaluz’s “Dumpster Diving and Conspiracy Theory” is a tease: he thinks up a scheme which

*continued on page 6*

*continued from page 5*

strikes him as clever and tells us he intends to execute it “next week.” Silver offers a last-minute page of thoughts on September 11th. Tom Whitmore, the chair of the forthcoming Worldcon, ConJose, gives us a dense four paragraphs entitled “Do We Know the Way to ConJose?” without telling us any facts about the convention (date, location, address to join) at all. Erik V. Olson’s “The Five Throated Voice of Ghu” is a heavily footnoted piece about a trip to Kennedy Space Center. Silver plugs Midwest Construction, a con-runner’s con for the Wimpy Zone. Mike Resnick has produced an annotated list of “The Best African Movies” which is both more comprehensive and better thought-out than one might expect. The issue concludes with six “mock” reviews of never-made SF movies, followed by a two-page run-

down of the issue’s contributors. That’s a lot of wordage, some of it serious in tone and some of it lighter. Not all of the pieces are successful, but none is a complete waste of space.

Physically, *Argentus*’ 40 pages are photo-copied (and occasionally created by the copier) from double-columned computer-set type. The layouts are dull and unimaginative and every page without exception has an obtrusive running head of swords and the *Argentus* logo which Silver has promised to banish from #2. In sum, like many first issues, this one has flaws of both conception and execution, but holds promise for future improvement.

—*Ted White*

We also received *SF Commentary* #77 and *Opuntia* # (?)

*continued from page 4*

Christmas gift exchange, so bring an inexpensive toy of some strange or interesting sort that you think someone might like, ca. \$3 from a loonie store, giftwrapped, no tag needed.

**BUSES:** to get to the Freemans’ from the restaurant, take the #401 One Road (going northbound on Garden City), departing at 6:50 and 7:19 p.m. respectively; this bus arrives at the 7000 block of No. 1 Road (at Granville) at 7:05 and 7:33 p.m. respectively.

To get to Vancouver from the Freemans’, the last three runs of the 98 B-Line depart Richmond Centre at 11:52 p.m., 12:07, and 12:24 a.m.; the last two runs of the #401 Garden City to connect with the 98 B-Line leave Kathleen’s block at 10:30 and 11:30 p.m., arriving about 10 minutes later at Richmond Centre. One more #401 leaves Kathleen’s place at 12:30 a.m. Two special-run late-night #401s go to Marpole Loop in South Vancouver (a 10-minute trip) from Richmond Centre at 1:12 and 1:55 a.m., but the last northbound #8 Fraser leaves Marpole Loop

at 1:11 a.m.

NOTE: If getting home Saturday night will be awkward or impossible for you, Kathleen and Philip can put you up for the night - but *arrange in advance* to crash with them.

On Sunday morning, the first #401 Garden City departs Richmond Centre at 6:25 a.m. and the first 98 B-Line departs Richmond Centre at 4:16 a.m.

RSVP Kathleen, even at the last minute, whether you will attend the dinner or party or both; phone 604-277-0845 or email pfreeman@direct.ca; also if you have any further questions.

**BCSFazine 344 Deadline:** December 21

**JANUARY 2002**

**Postage** in Canada goes up to 48 cents per 30 grams, 65 cents to the States, \$1.25 overseas; more detailed postage rate flyers should be

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# Book Reviews

by Donna McMahon

THE TRANQUILITY WARS, Gentry Lee  
(Bantam, Sept/01, mm, 627p)

THE FOREIGNERS, James Lovegrove  
(Gollancz, 2001, mm, 421p)

HARRY POTTER AND THE SCIENCE  
FICTION FAN, J.K. Rowling (many)

It's difficult to explain why I got such a kick out of reading *The Tranquility Wars*, a moderately dreadful novel by Texas space scientist Gentry Lee. "Offers surprise after surprise" says the New York Times, and they're sure not kidding. If Commander Data from Star Trek wrote a novel, I'm sure he would produce something like this bizarre mix of perceptive detail and ridiculously stilted writing.

Hunter Blake, age twenty, is a medic working on his home asteroid, Cicero. When Hunter wins the prestigious Covington Fellowship to study medicine on Mars, he is elated, and when he finds his gorgeous high school girlfriend, Tehani, booked on the same twenty day spaceflight, he's ecstatic.

But fate intervenes. Blake's space freighter is captured by pirates, and he is taken to work as a medic for the renegade asteroid colony, Utopia. As the weeks pass, Blake's loyalties become torn between the authoritarian government he grew up with and his new dope-smoking anarchist friends, and between the beautiful Tehani and his pretty clinic assistant, Ursula. Soon he must face wrenching personal choices.

I think the point at which I started giggling and reading out loud from this

book was when emergency sirens went off on Cicero. Instead of an announcement like "Red Alert! You have 30 minutes to reach the emergency shelters!" Lee has the mayor of Cicero come on TV to deliver a half page speech containing sentences like: "The [attacking] spacecraft have also failed to follow the accepted interplanetary protocol of periodically broadcasting their identification information."

Like Commander Data, Lee's characters avoid using contractions and they all speak like college textbooks. Even the sex scenes have a terribly earnest flavour, for instance: "...as soon as Hunter started returning Tehani's kiss he was overpowered by lust. He put his arms around her and squeezed much too forcefully. She broke the kiss at the first available opportunity."

This is also a very dated book. From Hunter's parents (Ward and June Cleaver of the asteroid belt), to the pirates who live in a free love, drug soaked commune, to the security guard who uses slang like "wise guy", this book screams of being written by somebody born in the 1930's.

Nonetheless, I enjoyed it and here's why. First, it was funny, even if not intentionally. More important, it was sprinkled with wonderful little snippets, such as Hunter's experience sharing a freighter cabin with an obsessive compulsive roommate. Every once in a while a vivid piece of conversation or action would jump off the page - clearly something the author had seen or done himself.

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## **V-CON SOCIETY EXECUTIVE/ BOARD MEETING**

Sunday, November 4, 2001, 4:00 p.m.  
at Blenz Coffee at Library Square

### **Agenda**

1. Motion to waive the reading of the minutes
2. Motion to accept Palle's recommendation of the venue for VCon 27
3. Motion to set the October 5-7 (CDN Thanksgiving/US Columbus Day weekend) as the new date for VCon.
4. Motion to accept Palle's bid for VCon 27.
5. Motion to name the President/Treasurer of the V-Con Society and the Chair/Treasurer of VCon 27 as the signing authorities on the V-Con Society/VCon 27 Bank Account at the Broadway CIBC.
6. Motion to set the date/location for the Annual General Meeting/Election (VCon 27 Hotel/1st ConCom meeting recommended)
7. New Business
8. Adjournment

Attending: Palle Hoffstein, Garth Spencer, Barbara Dryer, Clint Budd, Nico Iormetti, Andrew Brechin, David Hale. (Lorna Appleby was away this weekend.)

Clint called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

#### **1. Motion to waive the reading of the minutes**

Andrew moved that we waive the reading of the last minutes. Palle seconded the motion, and it was carried.

#### **2. Motion to accept Palle's recommendation of the venue for VCon 27**

Palle discoursed on his recommendation to hold VCon 27 at the Guildford Sheraton, comparing it to the Holiday Inn Central and the Executive Inn. (Note: the news in the previous BCSFAzine was in error; VCon 27

is not in fact financially committed yet to the Sheraton.) Palle moved to hold VCon 27 at the Guildford Sheraton. Clint seconded.

After Palle presented the various tradeoffs, Nico questioned whether we should go with the Sheraton, versus the Holiday Inn, and proposed an amendment to the motion. Andrew asked how much of a financial loss could we afford, in the worst case; Clint estimated \$400 to \$500.

Palle amended his motion to read that he recommended the Sheraton, BUT IF he hadn't confirmed his Guests of Honour by the end of November 2001, we should go with the Holiday Inn.

The motion was put, and carried unanimously.

#### **3. Motion to set the Canadian Thanksgiving/U.S. Columbus Day weekend in October as the new date for VCon.**

Garth and Barbara asked about the actual date in October 2002 when VCon 27 is to be held; Clint realized that he had stated the wrong weekend dates in the agenda he broadcast by email, and that the Thanksgiving/Columbus Day weekend in October 2002 will in fact be October 11-13 of that year.

Clint moved that we set the weekend of the Canadian Thanksgiving/U.S. Columbus Day weekend as the new date for VCon. Garth seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **4. Motion to accept Palle's bid for VCon 27.**

Andrew moved that we accept Palle's bid for VCon 27. Nico seconded, and the motion was passed 6 to 0 (Palle abstaining).

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**5. Motion to name the President/Treasurer of the V-Con Society and the Chair/Treasurer of VCon 27 as the signing authorities on the V-Con Society/VCon 27 Bank Account at the Broadway CIBC.**

Clint moved that four signing authorities for the bank account be named: the President and Treasurer of the Society (Clint and Nico respectively), and the Chair and Treasurer of the current VCon (Palle and Charles Austin respectively). Andrew seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**6. Motion to set the date/location for the Annual General Meeting/Election**

Clint was concerned to set a date before the AGM was further postponed into December 2001. Palle was concerned that his first, informal concom meeting NOT be also a formal Society meeting. Clint suggested two weekends in November; after some discussion those present agreed to meet on Sunday, the 18<sup>th</sup> November, time and place to be announced.

**7. New Business**

There was no new business.

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

*continued from page 7*

Finally, there was a pleasant aura to this book. Lee writes about sex and drugs and rock and roll like a genial, slightly bemused anthropologist, and he brings genuine enthusiasm to his musings about technology, government and society. This man can't write a convincing villain to save his life, but he sounds like somebody I'd very much like to meet at a party.

So, the characters are stilted (especially the women) and the plot is full of holes but what the heck, I recommend it. I've read a lot of better books that haven't left me with a smile on my face.

\* \* \* \*

Speaking of which:

Jack Parry got his start in the London Metropolitan Police, battling urban violence in a world rapidly descending into brutal anarchy. But seventeen years ago all that changed overnight when the aliens arrived on Earth.

Since the Foreigners appeared, striding in golden, enigmatic majesty through the streets of every city, Earth has been at peace. Alien "crystech" has replaced polluting human technology, and large resorts have been built to lure alien tourists. Now a Captain of the Foreign Policy Police in the wealthy resort city of New Venice, Parry is deeply grateful that this shining new future has given him a career as a moral persuader instead of a uniformed thug.

But the idyllic existence of Parry and his city is threatened when a human and an alien are found dead in a plush hotel room. Is it a suicide pact or a murder committed by xenophobic terrorists? The FPP must find out, and as the pressure mounts Parry is afraid they may lose everything, including the alien tourists that are the city's livelihood and the humans' fragile, hard won peace.

This thoughtful novel by British writer James Lovecraft, felt to me like a blend of a police procedural and a European

art film. The book is structured around a murder investigation, but this is not a page-turner. Instead, Lovecraft spends a great deal of time painting in the details of his society and his protagonist, Parry, and pondering the nature of cultural bigotry and the inherent contradictions of trying to police a peaceful, democratic society.

In the SF spectrum, this book is a social satire in which the science fictional elements are simply plot devices. The alien tech is never explained, nor are the aliens, nor for that matter do we ever get a clear idea of why humans stopped warring when the aliens arrived. It's just set-up for Lovegrove's philosophical musings.

All of the characters in *The Foreigners* are strong, and there is quite a bit of action, but overall the book felt ponderous and I was left with the curious sensation that very little had happened. Also, I found it intellectually interesting, rather than involving. Jack Parry is a well drawn protagonist but I didn't warm to him or come to care much about his problems.

Readers who like a literary style and sensibility, and intelligent fables will enjoy this very well written novel, but it's a head book rather than a heart book, and firmly in the mainstream rather than genre.

\* \* \* \*

I'm surprised that outraged adults aren't pounding on J.K. Rowling's door. By her fourth Harry Potter book she has broken most of the unwritten rules of current children's literature.

Bad things happen to good people. Adults lie to children and make bad decisions. Life isn't fair or safe. And here's the kicker. People die in Potter books. Even children. Even good, heroic children. Wow.

I'm not going to bother synopsisizing the plot of Rowlings' four (so far) books; anybody who hasn't heard about them is either dead or living in Afghanistan. Instead here are some impressions of a lifelong SF/Fantasy reader who, out of curiosity, read all the books and went to see The Movie.

Rowlings isn't breaking new ground in her slick update of the hoary British boarding school story. Take an Enid Blyton book, make the school co-ed and co-ethnic, and then transform it into a school for wizards, and you pretty much have it. She even has a classic Victorian hero - the brave orphan boy. But Rowlings carries this off very very well.

For starters, her magical world is full of things that ought to be. The people in wizard photographs wave at you, or preen, or try to sneak out of the picture. When your parents are mad at you they send a "howler" - a message that arrives at breakfast and screams at top volume in front of the whole school. Dishes are washed by magic and the school nurse tells you to eat your chocolate.

The setting and the details are imaginative and fun, but what gives the books weight is how Rowlings handles children. She treats them as people with real - often distressingly real - problems. Harry finds himself in situations that even an adult would find frightening, such as being singled out and harassed by a vengeful teacher (think bullying

boss and vulnerable employee) or having everyone in school shun him because they believe he's done something terrible (consider an adult being falsely charged with a crime).

In fact, these books are surprisingly dark, and that was my one concern after seeing the film version. The Movie soft-pedals some of the truly frightening human interactions in favour of special effects – a Disneyfication that I hope isn't a sign of things to come.

The Harry Potter series, like the kids books I grew up with, is essentially male focused, with boys and men filling most of the important roles. At first that an-

noyed me, but after a while I decided I didn't care. The female characters are well portrayed, and what the heck – boys can use some good role models for a change.

After an endless stream of earnest Problem Books that are supposed to teach kids how to deal with the psychosocial crisis of the week, it's wonderful to read juveniles that focus on an imaginative, entertaining story and yet also have the guts to portray real children with real problems that defy easy solutions.

So I'm a fan. Bring on the sequels!

*Comments? Questions? Rebuttals?*  
[donna\\_mcmahon@sunshine.net](mailto:donna_mcmahon@sunshine.net)

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For example: a fan coming to conventions for the first time these days has every reason to think that he or she is buying a ticket and watching a show. That is almost the only model of leisure interest activity available, in popular culture, for the last generation. Participatory activities are limited to charitable institutions, except for maybe the SCA.

However, SF conventions began, *and are still modeled*, after an older concept of *making your own entertainment*. Which is why conventions – well, most conventions – sell memberships, not tickets, and expect even the paying members to pitch in and volunteer at conventions.

Another example: a fan entering a contemporary fan group is likely to enter a group focused exclusively on gaming or filking or Trek or other media or anime or comics or furry fandom, not a commu-

nity with a generality of interests. And, I note, they're not getting quite a lot of messages, they don't hear a lot of terms of reference. I think this is why Trekkers and mediafans redefined "fanzine" to mean an amateur fiction magazine for which money was charged, focused specifically on fanfiction about their favourite Trek or media series, rather than original story universes. I think this is also why anime fans redefined a costume masquerade as "cosplay" and refer to con as "staff." They were making up their own terms of reference; and why shouldn't they? It isn't as if anyone were telling them anything different.

As a matter of simple honesty, I think, fannish fans like BCSFans – or fanzine fans like myself – have to admit to a failure to communicate. I've seen this before; most human beings will make any other effort before examining, and defining, their terms of reference. Partly it's an aversion based on the fact that

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most people find attending to words incredibly tedious. Partly, I think, people normally don't realize when they don't communicate.

Now, I told you all that in order to ask you this: what do BCSFAns have to say to potential members? To fans in other groups, and to people who haven't joined anything yet? What do we offer, what are we interested in, and what terms of reference must we explain?

What message do we want to put out, and how do we validate our activities to people already doing other things?

We hold VCon, as long as we can rope someone into bidding, which usually takes a few months longer than we ex-

pect. We also publish *BCSFazine*. Some of us join the monthly Feeding Frenzies, or hold writers' workshops. We hold monthly programming events, if someone is interested and able to do so. We hold an Annual General Meeting, or we would if enough people would attend. A few of us publish fanzines, but not most of us. We used to participate in apas, BCAPA and *Canfandom* (and we could revive them if someone will take the initiative ...)

Let me ask you: what *do* we do, and what do we offer prospective members?

I'll just put that question to you and let you think about it for a while. Your ideas and comments will be appreciated.

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available in January.

#### **Jan. 4: BCSFazine Mailout**

**Sat. Jan. 5: Perihelion Party** at the home of Philip Freeman and Kathleen Moore-Freeman, 7064 No. 1 Road, Richmond. A fairly wheelchair-accessible home, with driveway space for six cars. Munchies, hot chocolate, tea, instant coffee and a non-alcoholic punch will be provided; bring your own booze, or whatever else you like to drink. RSVP Kathleen, even at the last minute, whether you will attend the dinner or party or both; phone 604-277-0845 or email pfreeman@direct.ca; also if you have any further questions.

#### **Jan. 8: BCSFazine 345 Deadline**

### **MEMBERS' ADVENTURES**

#### *Changes of Address, Email and Telnos:*

A number of members' email addresses, notably those formerly at home.com, are now served by shaw.ca. Just a few examples: Andrew Brechin can now be contacted at breklor@shaw.ca.

Graeme Cameron is now at rgraeme@shaw.ca.  
Stan Hyde is now at stanhyde@shaw.ca.  
Lisa McGovern is now at lisa93@shaw.ca.

Barb Dryer's current number is now 604-267-7973.

Gary B. Wadham (#4 -323 7th St., New Westminster, B.C. V3M 2K9) has changed his email to gbwadham@telus.net

#### *Expiring Memberships*

- as of November 2001: Brenda Corbett & Randy Barnhart; Linda Earl; Peter Halasz; Palle Steve Hoffstein; Andrew Kacerik; Delphine Kelly; Duncan MacGregor; Sydney Trim; M. Beulah Wadsworth.  
- as of December 2001: Stanley Foo.  
- as of January 2002: Vera Johnson; Garth Spencer.

*Missing Persons:* Where are the following BCSFazine recipients? Their email copies of BCSFazine #341 bounced back: Michael Dezotell, Peter Tupper, GJ Smith, Wilko Mueller, and Jill Pruett.

RAY SEREDIN's mother will be moved either to Victoria or to Vancouver for about three weeks of

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rehabilitation. (He won't know which until the end of November.) Ray is looking for crash space, and is looking to move to Vancouver soon anyway. He is going to stay initially at a bed & breakfast place, the Shaughnessy on West 12<sup>th</sup> in Vancouver. Again, contact Kathleen as above if you think you need crash space. RSVP Kathleen so they know what number of people to expect.

*Nuptials* -YOLANDA "MIMICK" GOODWIN has announced her engagement to "that man of mine" Eric (*surname not established - Ed*).

#### *Web Stuph:*

Our President R. Graeme Cameron has posted a website at <http://members.shaw.ca/rgraeme/home.html>, which is to serve as a CanFanCyclopedia. Only a few of its Web pages have been posted yet, but more will be added as time goes on. For the purpose Graeme has a secondary email address, [canfancylopedia@shaw.ca](mailto:canfancylopedia@shaw.ca). (*At present his entries are strongly, or entirely focused on Canadian fanzines, which means he needs YOUR help to cover other current Canadian fan stuph -Ye Ed.*)

David Hale continues to take care of the BCSFA website (<http://www3.telus.net/dh2/bcsfa>) and the V-Con Society website (<http://www3.telus.net/dh2/vconsociety>).

Barb Dryer reminds me that the VCon 24 website is still active; Wiebe de Jong owns this site at [www.geocities.com/Area51/Corridor/7214/vcon24/](http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Corridor/7214/vcon24/).

Lorna Appleby takes care of the VCon 27 website ([www.v-con.ca](http://www.v-con.ca), also accessible via [www.shadowdreamer.com/VCON/home.html](http://www.shadowdreamer.com/VCON/home.html)).

*Belated VCon Webmistress' Message:* "I know there were stacks of people with cameras at VCon 26. My pictures didn't turn out so well due to my flash dying horribly on the Friday night. But I'd like to put together a VCon memories page for 26. A gallery of various pictures. ^\_^

"If you'd like to send me the collection of your pictures via email I can handle up to 15 megs per email (Which really, was just the random number I chose when setting up send-mail ^\_^ ) so feel free to flood me at [lorna@shadowdreamer.com](mailto:lorna@shadowdreamer.com)."

*From: Lorna Appleby*

### **Regional**

The ConComCon 2002 Web page is now posted at <http://www.swoc.org/ccubed/>. ConComCon, you may or may not know, is supposed to be a Northwest-regional gathering for conrunners, although Canadians and in fact any fans from outside Washington state have been rare at C-Cubed.

### **National**

*Candidates for 2002 Canadian Unity Fan Fund (CUFF) Delegate Needed*

"The 2002 CUFF delegate will travel to Calgary, Alberta to attend Convention 22. The 2002 Convention is being hosted by Conversion 19.

"Conversion 19 happens Aug. 9 through 11, 2002. The Conversion 19 web site URL is <http://www.con-version.org>. Conversion 19's best-known guest is George R.R. Martin.

"Convention is the annual physical expression of the Canadian SF professional and fan community's appreciation of the best of Canadian professional and amateur activity in the previous year.

"The English-language and French-language winners in each professional category and in each fan category receive the recognition of their peers, represented by a trophy, the Aurora Award.

"CUFF's connection to the Convention is that the CUFF fund pays the travel expense and the hotel room expense of a fan attending the Convention.

"In a country in which business travel and personal travel increasingly is north and south, CUFF encourages the linking of fans on the opposite sides of the Manitoba-Ontario border.

"The CUFF delegate attends the Convention as an ambassador of one part of Canadian fandom to another part of Canadian fandom. During the 2002 Conversion/Convention the CUFF delegate is encouraged:

- \* To volunteer to help put on Conversion.
- \* To attend the Convention business meeting.
- \* To represent CUFF.
- \* Take notes of what is heard and seen and said.

"Following the 2002 Conversion/Convention, the 2002 CUFF delegate becomes the CUFF administrator. The CUFF administrator's duties include:

- \* Writing, publishing, and selling a CUFF trip report. Publishing a trip report is important

because SciFi Inc. of Southern California, on receipt of a fan fund trip report, donates \$500 to CUFF.

\* Opening a bank account into which all of the CUFF money received by the CUFF administrator is placed.

\* Organizing the selection of a successor who will be the 2003 CUFF delegate and administrator.

\* Passing the CUFF money to the 2003 CUFF delegate.

To qualify to be a CUFF delegate you:

\* Are a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident.

\* Agree to attend the 2002 Convention.

\* Agree to fulfill the obligations of the CUFF administrator.

To become a CUFF delegate candidate:

\* Before Mar. 1, 2002, deliver to the 2002 CUFF administrator a maximum 100-word election platform.

"In theory the Convention alternates between host conventions on either side of the Manitoba-Ontario border. In fact the 2001 Convention was hosted by VCon in Vancouver and it will happen in Calgary in 2002. Accordingly, the 2002 CUFF delegate race is open to all fans who live outside of Alberta.

"In theory the CUFF delegate is elected. If fact, more often, the CUFF delegate is acclaimed. In the case of an election, which means the selecting of the candidates whose names will appear on the ballot, I recommend that each candidate gather nominations from three fans living on each side of the Manitoba-Ontario border.

"I want to receive two kinds of CUFF 2002 delegate selection messages:

\* Notice from fans that they are candidates.

\* Recommendations from other fans, with reasons, of fans who could be the CUFF delegate.

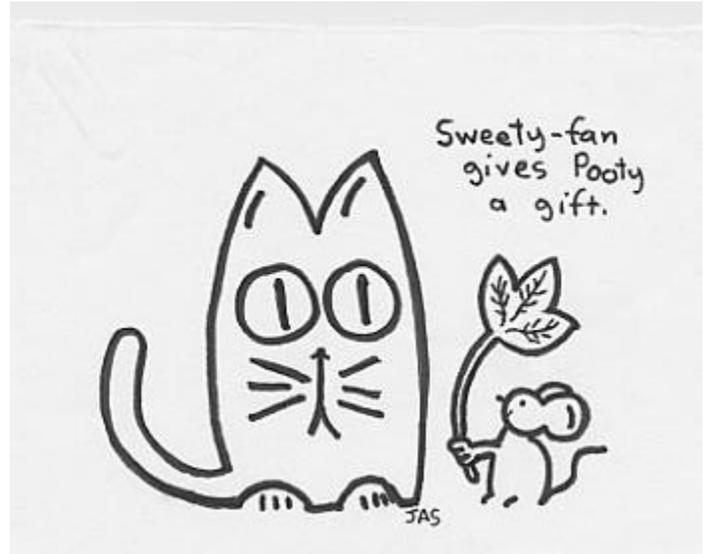
"Contact me with questions and comments:

Murray Moore, 2001 CUFF Administrator, [mmoore@pathcom.com](mailto:mmoore@pathcom.com) or (905) 281-8540 (home) and (905) 206-1296 ext. 287 (work) or 1065 Henley Road, Mississauga, ON L4Y 1C8."

*Murray Moore <[mmoore@pathcom.com](mailto:mmoore@pathcom.com)>*

*Ditto 15 in Toronto in October, 2002 news:*

Murray Moore writes, "... I opened the Ditto 15 bank account the Thursday following Ditto 14. My bank does not charge a fee to accept US\$



cheques, thus all US\$ cheques should come directly to me. Ditto 15 attending membership remains \$30 made payable to Ditto and mailed to me at my address at the end of this message. "Supporting membership, no change. \$10 CDN or US, made payable to Ditto and mailed to me at my address at the end of this message."

Ditto, you may or may not know, is the second oldest fanzine-focused SF convention, and in fact was launched in Toronto in the late 1980s.

*Lower attending membership rate for Canadians!* Canadian dollar cheques of \$45 made payable to Ditto can be mailed to: 2002 Ditto 15, c/o Murray Moore, 1065 Henley Road, Mississauga, ON L4Y 1C8.

*Murray Moore <[mmoore@pathcom.com](mailto:mmoore@pathcom.com)>*

*Belated Sunburst News:* "The Sunburst Award committee is pleased to announce the winner of its first annual presentation: *GALVESTON* by Sean Stewart (Ace Books)

"The presentation took place Saturday, September 29, at the Canwest Global Performing Arts Theatre as part of the Winnipeg International Writers Festival. The author received a cash prize of \$1,000 and a solid bronze "sunburst" medallion crafted by Linda Carson, (based on a design by Marcel Gagné). The presenter of the award was juror Leon Rooke. ...

"For more information about Sean Stewart, see his web site: [www.seanstewart.org](http://www.seanstewart.org). ...

"For information about eligibility and the selection process, we invite you to visit the Sunburst Award web site, [www.sunburstaward.org](http://www.sunburstaward.org), or write the committee at: The Sunburst Award, Attn: Mici Gold, Award Secretary, 106 Cocksfield Avenue, North York, Ontario CANADA M3H 3T2.

*Mici Gold [mici@sunburstaward.org](mailto:mici@sunburstaward.org), 29 September*

*2001*