

BCSFA Zine

The newsletter of the B.C. Science Fiction Association

*** Special 400th Commemorative Issue! ***

\$3.00

September 2006



Highlights of this issue:

*Golden Gems of BCSFAzine writing, both reprinted and new;
remembering the Honoured Dead of BCSFA; crank theories (with formulas!);
perfect reviews of nonexistent books; the Fannish Food Chain;
Gumbies and fannish intellectual repartée*

Masthead/Colophon/and other Wallpaper

BCSFAzine © September 2006, Volume 34, #9, Issue #400 is the monthly club newsletter published by the British Columbia Science Fiction Association, a social organization. (NOTE: The West Coast Science Fiction Association is a separate, officially registered society. In effect, BCSFA is a committee of WCSFA.)

BCSFAzine is printed most excellently by the good people at **Copies Plus, at 1950 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC, tel. 604-731-7868.**

BCSFAzine is distributed monthly at WHITE DWARF BOOKS, 3715 West 10th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V6R 2G5, tel. 604-228-8223; email whitedwarf@deadwrite.com. Single copies C\$3.00/US\$2.00 each.

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EDITORIAL



This being the 400th issue of *BCSFazine*, we thought a commemorative issue would be appropriate. After all, *BCSFazine* is the longest-running SF club newsletter in the Northwest. Or in Canada. Possibly in all of North America. Well, maybe that's bragging too much.

In this commemorative issue, you should find not only our regular features, but also some background about the BCSFA club, and about Vancouver fandom generally. I have tried to bring together a collection of representative articles and entertainment from the last ten years.

Time ran a little short before I could complete an explicit chronicle of recent, local fanhistory, since the 300th issue in 1996 or so; but since I contemplated making the next issue an introduction to Vancouver fandom, in time for VCon, maybe that kind of backgrounder fits into next issue, anyway.

"The time is right to make new friends."
Chinese fortune cookie

SCIENCE AND UNREASONABLE FACSIMILES

Unfortunately the celebrated "Mr. Science" column was discontinued before issue #300; otherwise I would feature some of his delightfully creative answers to frequently asked science questions. A collection of his columns from previous *BCSFazines* may still exist in collectors' hands, and may even still be on the BCSFA website.

THE DARK FORCE OF URINALS

(Inspired by The Colbert Report's anti-bear position)

With the invention (and proliferation) of urinals, dark forces have conspired to make America more vulnerable to bear attack. With each flush, men across the country are letting their liquid gold go down the drain.

From <http://www.bearsmart.com/bearsBackyard/Deterrents.html> "Human male urine can be used to effectively deter bears and other animals from specific locations. Female urine is ineffective. Simply deposit urine in areas where bears are not welcome or around the perimeter of your property. Effectiveness will lessen over time."

(Forwarded by Julian Castle on August 7, 2006, who comments: "*I assume effectiveness can be maintained by depositing more urine, when the previous batch of urine has been diluted by the elements.*")

THE CONTRARIANS – A NEW SHOW ON CBC RADIO

"The Contrarians' is a radio show about unpopular ideas that just might be right. Each week, host Jesse Brown invites listeners to step outside of their intellectual comfort zones and try an unorthodox opinion on for size. You may be surprised by what starts making sense."

'The Contrarians' regularly airs on: CBC Radio One Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. - 10 a.m. Canada Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m. - 8 p.m. Canada (so in Pacific time zone, will be at Tuesday at 9:30 AM Pacific and Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. Pacific)

"If your radio doesn't receive a CBC Radio One station, then you can listen to CBC Radio stations at <http://www.cbc.ca/listen/index.html>

"This week on the Contrarians: ideas should be free. It's time to abolish copyright."

Julian "Earthfurst" Castle, August 8, 2006

<http://www.cbc.ca/programguide/program/index.jsp?program=The%20Contrarians>

GIANT ROBOT IMPRISONS PARKED CARS

By Quinn Norton Tuesday 8 August 2006

"The robot that parks cars at the Garden Street Garage in Hoboken, New Jersey, trapped hundreds of its wards last week for several days. But it wasn't the technology car owners had to curse, it was the terms of a software license.

"The garage is owned by the city; the software, by Robotic Parking of Clearwater, Florida.

"In the course of a contract dispute, the city of Hoboken had police escort the Robotic employees from the premises just a few days before the contract between both parties was set to expire. What the city didn't understand or perhaps concern itself with, is that they sent the company packing with its manuals and the intellectual property rights to the software that made the giant robotic parking structure work.

"The Hoboken garage is one of a handful of fully automated parking structures that make more efficient use of space by eliminating ramps and driving lanes, lifting and sliding automobiles into slots and shuffling them as needed. If the robot shuts down, there is no practical way to manually remove parked vehicles.

"In the days that followed, both sides dragged each other into court. Robotic accused Hoboken of violating its copyright. "This case is about them using software without a license," said Dennis Clarke, chief operating officer of Robotic Parking, in a telephone interview last week.

"At the same time, Hoboken accused Robotic of setting booby traps in the code, causing the garage to malfunction. Then Robotic accused Hoboken of endangering its business by allowing a competitor into the garage.

"In the meantime, many of the garage's customers simply couldn't get their cars out. ... "

Forwarded by Felicity Walker, August 8, 2006

GREG'S SPACE NEWS

- Space Shuttle Discovery with its seven-member crew visited the International Space Station July 4 to 17, 2006. Canada played a critical role by providing an extended inspection boom and a 3-D laser camera which were used to examine the outer surfaces and tiles of the space shuttle. (More... <http://www.space.gc.ca/asc/eng/apogee/2006/08_sts-121.asp>)

- To learn about space history from a Canadian point of view, space fans, aficionados and novices alike, will be attending the new space exhibition Space Odyssey: The Canadian Adventure. The exhibit runs June 2006 till February 2007 at the historical museum La Pulperie in Chicoutimi, Quebec (More...

<http://www.space.gc.ca/asc/eng/apogee/2006/08_odyssey.asp>)

- Great quantities of carbon gas around a distant star named Beta Pictoris were recently discovered by scientists using NASA's Far Ultraviolet Spectroscopic Explorer (FUSE) to which Canada contributed sensor instruments. (More...

<http://www.space.gc.ca/asc/eng/apogee/2006/08_solarsystem.asp>

-EVENTS: The Canadian Space Agency's fifth annual Educator Conference August 8 to 10, 2006; Canadian attends the NASA Academy; Canadian astronaut Dr. Dave Williams shares NEEMO 9 experience; Two Canadian Educators Return from "Mars"; Tremblant Beneath the Stars, August 11 and 12, 2006 (More...

<http://www.space.gc.ca/asc/eng/apogee/2006/08_events.asp>

Greg Slade, August 14, 2006

THE WRITING LIFE

A founding member of BCSFA once told me that the natural life cycle of fans led to an aspiring-writer phase. Be that as it may, some writers' awards, book releases, and market news comes our way, and it seems reasonable to feature it, for interested members.

Awards

The Aurora Awards, honouring Canadian science fiction, fantasy and fan achievements in both English and French, is a fan-voted award presented annually at the Convention, the travelling national convention. VCon has hosted the awards on several recent occasions; more information will appear in a fanhistory article next issue. VCon will serve as Convention again in 2007.

The Elron Awards, for the worst contributions to science fiction and fandom in the preceding year, have been presented at most VCons, and chronicled faithfully by our president and archivist, R. Graeme Cameron. A fairly complete list should be archived on the BCSFA or VCon website.

The Elrons are neither fan-voted like the Auroras, nor juried awards like the Sunburst, so YOU can make your own suggestions for this year's Elrons! Almost right up to this year's Vcon! Just contact R. Graeme Cameron. Now you know another reason why I put his email and phone number in the back of this zine!

AWARDS ABROAD:

Campbell Memorial: Robert Sawyer, *Mindscan*. (To the delight of Andrew I. Porter, who bought a role in this book at a 2002 fan charity auction.)

Heinleins for sf achievement (total body of work): Greg Bear and Jack Williamson. [SD]

Rhyslings for sf poetry, announced 8 July: LONG Kendall Evans & David C. Kopaska-Merkel, 'The Tin Men' (*Magazine of Speculative Poetry* Winter 2004/5). SHORT Mike Allen, 'The Strip Search' (*Strange Horizons* 10/05).

Sturgeon for short story: Paolo Bacigalupi, 'The Calorie Man' (*F&SF* 10/05).

Ansible 229, August 2006

Contests

Sept. 30: deadline for the first annual **Penknife Press Short Story Writing Contest**. From the entries received, we will be creating an anthology of contemporary short stories that say something insightful about contemporary society. Some of the rules: Entrant must be 21 years of age. Contest begins at 12:00:01 a.m. Chicago Time on Saturday, July 15, 2006 and ends at 11:59:59 p.m. Chicago Time on Saturday, September 30, 2006. Submit your entry online to contest@penknife.com. Each entry must be 1000 - 5000 words. The story should have a social and/or political theme that reflects current events. Only one entry per person. More than one entry from any person or e-mail address will void all entries from that person or e-mail address. The following prizes will be awarded: First Prize: \$1,000.00. Second Prize: \$600.00. Third Prize: \$400.00. More information at <http://WWW.PENKNIFEPRESS.COM>. Copyright (c) 2003 by Penknife Press, Ltd., 7544 S. Phillips Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60649, USA.

Dec. 31: deadline for **The National Fantasy Fan Federation 2006 amateur short story contest**. Stories must be original SF, fantasy, paranormal, and related genres. Submit in standard competition format plus \$4 fee, cash or cheque payable to Jeff Redmond (contest manager), 1335 Beechwood NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505-3830 or email to redmondjeff@hotmail.com for more information. Prizes are \$50 (first place), \$30 (second place), \$20 (third place), etc. All rights remain with author. For more information about the N3F, see www.nfff.org and www.scififan.org.

Upcoming Book Releases

ALYX SHAW, *FAMOUS IN SWITZERLAND*

"Well, Saturday the 12th of August, I had my first 'appearance' as a Writer Guest of Honour at the first MiniCon in Basel, Switzerland. Actually it was a phone-in, with con-goers seated before a speakerphone, and me thousands of miles away in Canada, sweating in my underwear and absolutely terrified. Turnout was smaller than con organizer Chris Z. had hoped for; what with bomb threats and such slowing up traffic. Yet still fans from England, France and Germany managed to attend. They cheerfully grilled me for well over the originally scheduled time of a half hour, asking from whence my character names, ideas and etc. came. It was a lot of fun and I really enjoyed myself, and we're hoping there will be a MiniCon II.

"As for my book, *A Strange Place in Time - Book I, The Recalling of John Arrowsmith*, my publisher Laura Thomson assures me it will be out early September. It is a limited fine press edition, each book signed by myself, bound in either Nigerian goatskin or Japanese silk. It's going to be gorgeous, and expensive. I find it slightly disturbing that I can't afford my own book, but her brand spanking new publishing house, 'Doppelganger Press' *only* does fine limited edition. However, I am working on a more economical version... ah... in German. Two fans of the book, who go by the on-line names of Naurring and Nellas of Doriath, both natives of Germany, are translating and illustrating Book I for me, and we are going to send it to some publishing houses in Berlin. Hopefully it will do well there; I've had no end of trouble trying to publish it in North America, so much so I had given up on the idea. Seems most publishers get twitchy when confronted with such characters as a gay biker and a female warrior who eats raw bleeding meat and does *not* go into battle wearing half a thong.

"I'm really pleased with the grass roots support I am being shown by my readers. My official fan listing, the translating and illustrating for 'S.P.I.T.', even the publishing, is being done by people who just believe in my work, and are not getting a penny from me for any of it, though I have told Naurring and Nellas that if the work sells I will make absolutely certain they will be compensated for their effort. As for *She Who Walks On Water*, *Keeper of the Sacred White Malteasers*, my best friend Chris who runs my website and my fan listing, no payment would ever be enough to show my appreciation. But! If I ever manage to kidnap Hugo Weaving, I will certainly stuff him into a box and mail him to her. Of course I will make sure he was air holes, bedding and carrots as well.

"Well that's all from me. Be well, take care, and look forward to seeing you in October!"

Alyx J Shaw, August 14, 2006

You can find more stuff by Alyx on:

Ex Libris - Tales by The Magic Rat: <http://www.shanksadelic.net/~exlibris/>

Ex Libris Tales - The Magic Rat mailing group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ex-libris-tales/>

The Rat Pack - The Official Magic Rat fan listing: <http://www.wozupdoc.net/~ratpack/>



THE LOCUS BOOK RELEASE LIST

(taken from www.locusmag.com at August 2006)

September 2006

Anderson, Douglas A., *The 100 Best Writers of Fantasy and Horror* (Cold Spring Press, nf, tpb)

Asaro, Catherine, *Alpha* (Baen, hc)

Baker, Kage, *The Machine's Child* (Tor, hc)

Ballantyne, Tony, *Recursion* (Bantam Spectra)

Ballard, J. G., *Kingdom Come* (HarperCollins UK, hc)
 Barclay, James, *A Shout for the Dead* (Orion/Gollancz, hc/tpb)
 Baxter, Stephen, *Resplendent* (Orion/Gollancz, hc/tpb)
 Brooks, Terry, *Armageddon's Children* (Little Brown UK/Orbit, hc/Ballantine Del Rey, hc)
 Brown, Eric, *Threshold Shift* (Golden Gryphon Press, cln, hc)
 Courtenay Grimwood, Jon, *Stamping Butterflies* (Bantam Spectra, tpb)
 de Camp, L. Sprague, & Fletcher Pratt, *The Mathematics of Magic* (NESFA Press, cln, hc)
 Dichario, Nick, *A Small and Remarkable Life* (Red Deer Press/Robert J. Sawyer Books, hc/tpb)
 Dozois, Gardner, & Jack Dann, eds., *Escape from Earth: New Adventures* (SFBC, anth, hc)
 Gemmell, David, *Troy: Shield of Thunder* (Transworld/Bantam UK, hc)
 Gorman, Ed, *Collected Ed Gorman: Volume I & II* (PS Publishing, cln, hc)
 Hamilton, Peter F., *Misspent Youth* (Ballantine Del Rey, hc)
 Hartwell, David G., & Kathryn Cramer, eds., *Year's Best Fantasy 6* (Tachyon Publications, anth, tpb)
 Hearn, Lian, *The Harsh Cry of the Heron* (Macmillan UK, hc/Penguin/Riverhead, hc)
 Heinlein, Robert A., & Spider Robinson, *Variable Star* (Tor, hc)
 Herbert, Brian, & Kevin J. Anderson, *Hunters of Dune* (Hodder & Stoughton, hc)
 Herbert, James, *The Secret of Crickley Hall* (Macmillan UK, hc)
 Herter, David, *On the Overgrown Path* (PS Publishing, nva, hc)
 Hobb, Robin, *Forest Mage* (HarperCollins/Eos, hc)
 Hoffman, Nina Kiriki, *Catalyst* (Tachyon Publications, tpb)
 Jones, Diana Wynne, *The Pinhoe Egg* (HarperCollins Children's Books UK, nvl-ya, hc)
 Kiernan, Caitlín R., *Alabaster* (Subterranean Press, cln, hc)
 Lake, Jay, *Trial of Flowers* (Night Shade Books, tpb)
 Le Guin, Ursula K., *Voices* (Harcourt, nvl-ya, hc)
 Meaney, John, *To Hold Infinity* (Prometheus/Pyr, hc)
 Miller, Deborah J., *Swarmthief's Treason* (Macmillan/Tor UK, tpb)
 Moorcock, Michael, ed., *Moorcock's Choice* (Robinson, anth, tpb)
 Parks, Richard, *Hereafter and After* (PS Publishing, nva, hc)
 Pelan, John, ed., *Alone on the Darkside: Echoes from the Shadows of Horror* (Penguin/Roc, anth)
 Reynolds, Alastair, *Zima Blue and Other Stories* (Night Shade Books, cln, hc)
 Robson, Justina, *Mappa Mundi* (Prometheus/Pyr, tpb)
 Secombe, Andy, *Endgame* (Macmillan/Tor UK, tpb)
 Stirling, S. M., *A Meeting at Corvallis* (Penguin/Roc, hc)
 Turtledove, Harry, *The Disunited States of America* (Tor, hc)
 Westerfeld, Scott, *The Last Days* (Penguin/Razorbill, nvl-ya, hc)

October 2006

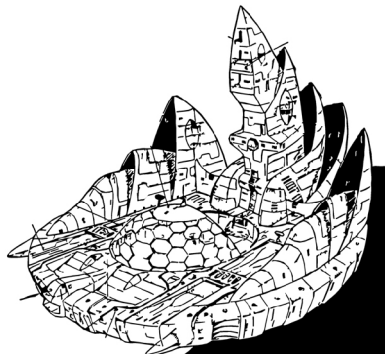
Asher, Neal, *Polity Agent* (Macmillan/Tor UK, hc)
 Bradbury, Ray, *Farewell Summer* (HarperCollins/Morrow, hc)
 Bradbury, Ray, *Match to Flame: The Fictional Path to Fahrenheit 451* (Gauntlet Press, cln, hc)
 Bujold, Lois McMaster, *Beguilement* (HarperCollins/Eos, hc)
 Clarke, Susanna, *The Ladies of Grace Adieu and Other Stories* (Bloomsbury, hc/tpb/Bloomsbury USA, cln, hc)
 Dalby, Richard, ed., *The Virago Book of Ghost Stories* (Little Brown UK/Virago, anth, tpb)
 Datlow, Ellen, & Terri Windling, eds., *Salon Fantastique* (Thunder's Mouth Press, anth, tpb)
 Dickinson, Peter, *The Angel Isle* (Macmillan Children's Books, nvl-ya, hc)
 Duchamp, L. Timmel, *Tsunami* (Aqueduct Press, tpb)

Elliott, Kate, *Spirit Gate* (Tor, hc)
 Flynn, Michael, *Eifelheim* (Tor, hc)
 Foster, Jon, *r/evolution: The Art of Jon Foster* (Underwood Books, art, hc)
 Gaiman, Neil, *Fragile Things* (HarperCollins/Morrow, cln, hc/Hodder Headline, cln, hc)
 Giller, Marc D., *Prodigal* (Bantam Spectra, tpb)
 Hoffman, Nina Kiriki, *Spirits That Walk in Shadow* (Penguin/Viking, nvl-ya, hc)
 Hughes, Matthew, *Majestrum* (Night Shade Books, hc)
 Jones, Diana Wynne, *The Pinhoe Egg* (HarperCollins/Greenwillow, nvl-ya, hc)
 Jones, Stephen, ed., *The Mammoth Book of Best New Horror: Volume Seventeen* (Thunder's Mouth Press, anth, tpb/Robinson, anth, tpb)
 King, Stephen, *Lisey's Story* (Simon & Schuster/Scribner, hc/Hodder & Stoughton, hc)
 Klages, Ellen, *The Green Glass Sea* (Penguin/Viking, nvl-ya, hc)
 Marillier, Juliet, *Blade of Fortriu* (Tor, hc)
 McCaughrean, Geraldine, *Peter Pan in Scarlet* (Simon & Schuster/McElderry, nvl-ya, hc/Oxford University Press, hc)
 McKenna, Juliet E., *Eastern Tide* (Little Brown UK/Orbit)
 McKiernan, Dennis L., *Once Upon a Spring Morn* (Penguin/Roc, hc)
 Morgan, Richard, *Black Man* (Orion/Gollancz, hc)
 Nicholls, Stan, *Quicksilver Twilight* (HarperCollins/Voyager, tpb)
 Pierce, Tamora, *Terrier* (Random House, nvl-ya, hc)
 Pratchett, Terry, *Wintersmith* (HarperCollins, nvl-ya, hc/Transworld/Doubleday UK, nvl-ya)
 Rawn, Melanie, *Spellbinder* (Tor, hc)
 Reeve, Philip, *Larklight* (Bloomsbury USA, nvl-ya, hc)
 Rickert, M., *Map of Dreams* (Golden Gryphon Press, cln, hc)
 Rusch, Kristine Kathryn, *Paloma* (Penguin/Roc)
 Ryan, C. J., *The Fifth Quadrant* (Bantam Spectra)
 Schow, David J., *Havoc Swims Jaded* (Subterranean Press, cln, hc)
 Schroeder, Karl, *Sun of Suns* (Tor, hc)
 Shinn, Sharon, *Dark Moon Defender* (Ace, hc)
 Sketchley, Martin, *The Liberty Gun* (Simon & Schuster UK, hc)
 Traviss, Karen, *Matriarch* (HarperCollins/Eos)
 Van Pelt, James, *Summer of the Apocalypse* (Fairwood Press, tpb)
 Watts, Peter, *Blindsight* (Tor, hc)
 Williams, Conrad, *The Unblemished* (Earthling Publications, hc)
 Williams, Sean, *The Blood Debt* (Prometheus/Pyr, hc)
 Wolfe, Gene, *Soldier of Sidon* (Tor, hc)

November 2006

Bova, Ben, *The Green Trap* (Tor/Forge, hc)
 Card, Orson Scott, *Empire* (Tor, hc)
 Cherryh, C. J., *Fortress of Ice* (HarperCollins/Eos, hc)
 Crowther, Peter, ed., *Forbidden Planets* (DAW, anth)
 Dann, Jack, & Gardner Dozois, eds., *Futures Past* (Ace, anth)
 Dart-Thornton, Cecilia, *Weatherwitch* (Tor, hc)
 Denton, Bradley, *Crystal White Trash* (Subterranean Press, hc)
 Farland, David, *Sons of the Oak* (Tor, hc)
 Fenner, Cathy, & Arnie Fenner, eds., *Spectrum 13: The Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art* (Underwood Books, anth, hc)

Gemmell, David, *Troy: Shield of Thunder* (Ballantine Del Rey, hc)
 Gentle, Mary, *Ilario: The Lion's Eye* (Orion/Gollancz, hc)
 Grant, Rob, *Fat* (Orion/Gollancz, hc)
 Halam, Ann, *Snakehead* (Orion Children's Books, nvl-ya, hc)
 Hamilton, Laurell K., *Strange Candy* (Berkley, cln, hc)
 Harrison, M. John, *Nova Swing* (Orion/Gollancz, hc/tpb)
 Heidel, R. Andrew, *Desperate Moon* (PS Publishing, cln, hc)
 Hemingway, Amanda, *The Poisoned Crown* (HarperCollins/Voyager, tpb)
 Hetley, James A., *Dragon's Teeth* (Ace, tpb)
 Jones, Tamara Siler, *Valley of the Soul* (Bantam Spectra)
 McDevitt, Jack, *Odyssey* (Ace, hc)
 McDevitt, Jack, *Outbound* (ISFiC Press, cln, hc)
 McLaughlin, Dean, *Dawn* (Gale Group/Five Star, hc)
 Oliver, Chad, *From Other Shores* (NESFA Press, omb, hc)
 Palmatier, Joshua, *The Cracked Throne* (DAW, hc)
 Parker, K. J., *The Engineer Trilogy: Book Two* (Little Brown UK/Orbit, tpb)
 Prucher, Jeff, *Brave New Words: The Oxford Dictionary of Science Fiction* (Oxford University Press, nf, hc)
 Reynolds, Alastair, *Galactic North* (Orion/Gollancz, cln, hc)
 Rosenblum, Mary, *Horizons* (Tor, hc)
 Scalzi, John, *The Android's Dream* (Tor, hc)
 Silverberg, Robert, *To Be Continued* (Subterranean Press, cln, hc)
 Sketchley, Martin, *The Liberty Gun* (Prometheus/Pyr, tpb)
 Stirling, S. M., *The Sky People* (Tor, hc)
 Stross, Charles, *The Jennifer Morgue* (Golden Gryphon Press, hc)
 Valente, Catherynne M., *In the Night Garden* (Bantam Spectra, tpb)
 Vallejo, Boris, & Julie Bell, *The Fabulous Women of Boris Vallejo and Julie Bell* (HarperCollins/Collins Design, art, hc)
 Waldrop, Howard, *Flying Saucer Rock and Roll. . . and Other Swell Stories: Selected Short Fiction 1980 - 2005* (Old Earth Books, cln, hc)
 Waldrop, Howard, *The Search for Tom Purdue* (Subterranean Press, hc)
 Wrede, Patricia C., & Caroline Stevermer, *The Mislaid Magician, or Ten Years After* (Harcourt, nvl-ya, hc)
 Wright, John C., *Fugitives of Chaos* (Tor, hc)



FANDOM

AS OTHERS SEE US

We are slans: `A lone clairvoyant among morons is often how a science fiction fan feels. Maybe he finds a sidekick or two to take the edge off his isolation, but when you're in the throes of fandom, the real world can become an imprecise blur. / Science fiction is, after all, a much better place to live than the standard American town: it is not only stacked with clearheaded fellow travelers - Vulcans, say - but it also gives up its secrets only to those with your particular set of interpretive skills. It's irresistible. Just as certain novels make heroes of bookish, melancholy, know-it-all types and thereby endear themselves to literary critics, certain television shows make heroes of obsessive, techy, alienated types, and thus endear themselves to sci-fi fans.' (*New York Times*, reviewing the tv show *Eureka*, 18 Jul) [MS]

Ansible 229, August 2006

THE WEEKLY BIFF REPORT Greg Slade (August 11, 2006)

Before I tell you about last week's BIFF, I'd just like to congratulate loyal BIFFizen Michael for winning an award for his lighting work on *The Diviners*. Congratulations, Michael!

We had fifteen people out to see *Muppets From Space*, and hear Dr. Van Neuter utter the immortal words, "Release me!" This, of course, was originally thought up by the Muppets, and any movie featuring a similar mad scientist in a similar glass-walled room uttering a similar line must obviously be a rip-off. That's my story, and I'm sticking to it.

This Friday, August 11th, DeeJ will introduce us to the joy that is *Phantom of the Paradise* to prove that *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* isn't the only gothic, rocky musical! Where else can you get *Phantom of the Opera*, *Faust* and a smidgen of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* tossed in?

Next Friday, August 18th, we will try a "show and tell" night. I encourage all of you to turn up with something fannish to talk about. Maybe it's the first book you bought by your favourite author, or maybe it's a little figurine of a character from your favourite movie, show, or comic. Maybe *you're* the one who bought that universal remote control in the shape of a light sabre which was being sold in the Dealers' Room at VCon the year before last. Alternatively, Val, the Minister of Bling, has issued a creativity challenge. To take part, bring an original story of 500 words or less, which contains the words "frog for rent." If you're too shy to read it out, we'll get somebody to do the honours for you.

The following Friday, August 25th, we will have another costuming session, featuring Looch from Act One Theatrical Makeup and Dance Supplies on Robson Street in Vancouver. (For those of you who were at the Hats Off Day Parade in Burnaby, Looch was the guy in the Darth Vader costume.)

On Friday, September 1st, we'll all be keeping our eyes peeled for Rodents Of Unusual Size, as we enjoy the film version of that great bedtime reading classic, *The Princess Bride* (but only the good parts.) Missing this night would be inconceivable.

Friday, September 8th is the 40th anniversary of the first broadcast of *Star Trek*. As it happens, ST won the Hugo two years in a row: for "The Menagerie" in 1966, and for "City on the Edge of Forever" in 1967. If we can track down copies of those two episodes, we'll be showing them.

On Friday, September 15th, we will have members of the concom for VCon 31 coming to tell us about all the cool stuff happening at this year's convention. If you're heard some of us raving about VCon, but you've never figured out what it's all about, this is a night not to be missed. Also, this will be the last day to buy VCon 31 memberships at the pre-registration price, so

return those bottles, check the couch cushions, slip the emergency cash out of your Tilley hat, and come prepared to buy a membership, if you haven't already done so.

On Friday, September 22nd, we have the return of "agenda free" night. No parliament to meddle in our conversations or our minds, nobody telling us what to think. We'll just be... independent. You might say we aim to... have fun.

On Friday, September 29th, we we'll have one last gaming night before VCon. If you want to get into some practice battling awful green things from outer space, or building a hotel on Tattooine, or getting that last wretched pie slice into your Gandalf piece, this is the last chance to get in some practice before what you might call the provincial championships.

On Friday, October 6th, BIFF will not be meeting at the usual location, but instead, we'll be heading to the wilds of Richmond for VCon 31, Vancouver's annual science fiction, fantasy, and gaming convention, at the Executive Airport Plaza, 7311 Westminster Highway. Val has booked a BIFF table in the Dealers' Room, and is looking for both stock and volunteers to make the table a success. The cabinet is still mulling over whether or not to go to the expense of booking a hotel room to hold a BIFF room party. (That will, of course, depend on donations.) However, my mention of dollar stores and novelty shops above reminds me that I have occasionally seen fannish items like drinking glasses, coffee mugs, serving trays, and so on, with fannish themes on them. If you have items like that, you might want to consider bringing them along to the room party (if we have one), to make eating and drinking a bit more fun than they'd be with more "normal" plates, cups, and so on. (And, of course, if you happen to notice something along those lines while browsing, well...)

On Friday, October 13th, we will have another author guest gracing us with her presence. Kathy Tyers, who wrote the Star Wars novels *The Truce at Bakura* and *Balance Point*, as well as *The Firebird Trilogy*, *Shivering World*, and other titles, is attending college in Vancouver this year, so we get to bring her out to BIFF for a good deal less expense than it would normally take to import an author guest from another country.

BIFF, or "Burrard Inlet Fan Fellowship" happens every Friday from 6:30 p.m. until closing at the Eighties Restaurant (www.eightiesrestaurant.com), 110 West 14th Street (at Lonsdale) in North Vancouver. To keep in touch with any changes, please check the BIFF website at:

<http://biff.digitaldoodles.com/>

Greg Slade, Aug. 2006

Lord of the OS

(Douglas Palmer, SystemsManager, USDC-EDNY)

Recently one of my friends, a computer wizard, paid me a visit. As we were talking I mentioned that I had recently installed Windows XP on my PC. I told him how happy I was with this operating system and showed him the Windows XP CD. To my surprise he threw the CD into my microwave oven and turned it on. Instantly I got very upset, because the CD had become precious to me, but he said: "Do not worry, it is unharmed." After a few minutes he took the CD out, gave it to me and said: "Take a close look at it. What do you see?"

To my surprise the CD was quite cold to the touch and it seemed to be weightier than before. At first I could not see anything, but on the inner edge of the central hole I saw an inscription, an inscription finer than anything I had ever seen before. The inscription shone piercingly bright, and yet remote, as if out of a great depth:

12413AEB2ED4FA5E6F7D78E78
EDE820945092OF923A40EEIOE5IOCC98D444AA08E324

"I cannot understand the fiery letters," I said in a timid voice.

"No, but I can," he said. "The letters are in Hex, of an ancient mode, but the language is that of Microsoft, which I shall not utter here in the light of day. In common English this is what it says:

*One OS to rule them all, One OS to find them,
One OS to bring them all and in the darkness bind them.*

These are but two lines from a verse long known in Systems lore:

*"Three OS's from corporate kings in their towers of glass,
Seven from valley lords where orchards used to grow,
Nine from dotcoms doomed to die,
One from the Dark Lord Gates on his wight-wrought throne
In the Land of Redmond where the Shadows lie.
One OS to rule them all, One OS to find them,
One OS to bring them all And in the darkness bind them,
In the Land of Redmond where the Shadows lie."*

*Forwarded by Our Man in Portland
<johnbartley@email.com>, 14 Jan 2002*

Members' Birthdays

4: Dixie Mueller disappeared into the wilds of Barnston Island with Art Mueller, but in the not- so-distant past she was the heartthrob of Victoria fandom.

9: Rick Smith vanished from BCSFA in the wake of Westercon 44; I don't remember whether he covered the cost of inviting Steve Jackson to be a Guest of Honour, without first consulting the chair.

13: Sam Dulmage won a lottery and quit his position as a part- time lamppost to become a professional detective. He vanished after reporting hints of an Illuminati plot to turn orcas and seals into Liberal supporters.

15: Mike Jackson vanished from BCSFA after Westercon 44, perhaps because his professional illustration career took off.

17: Sylvia Skene is a librarian by day, but when darkness falls and the moon rises, she dons her masked crimefighter outfit and becomes THE WILDCAT, foe of evildoers and nemesis of seafood dishes everywhere.

19: Lisa Smedman is a newspaper columnist and fantasy writer. She chaired one VCon and co-chaired another, and her secret superpower is CLASSIFIED UNDER THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT .

24: Geoff Barton disappeared after looking for Sam Dulmage.

29: Rastus Witherspoon- Li disappeared after looking for Geoff Barton.

30: Mike Lesiak is monitoring BCSFA activities for CSIS. Meanwhile, he is monitoring CSIS activities for the Forces of Darkness. Meanwhile, is monitoring the Forces of Darkness for the Libertarians. He is awaiting recruitment by the Illuminati.

The milk is high the bread is low. (Anon.)

Calendar

Weekly Events

Monday

Astronomy Café is an informal weekly gathering of people interested in Astronomy. Every Monday night at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Bruno Quenneville, the Vice President of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Victoria Centre.
(<http://victoria.rasc.ca/events/AstroCafe/Default.htm>)

Tuesday

Kamloops Anime Club (<http://www.geocities.com/kamloopsanimeclub/>) holds casual meetings on Tuesdays from 6:30 to 10:00 p.m. at Boston Pizza in downtown Kamloops. (Note that the meeting times and locations are occasionally different, so check the schedule on the Kamloops Anime Club web site if you are planning to attend.)

Thursdays

Ink Studs (comix radio show) from 2 pm to 3 pm on CiTR (101.9 FM or <http://citr.ca/live.rm>); <http://inkstuds.livejournal.com/>

Fridays

5pm to 6pm: Hi-Sci-Fi (science-fiction radio show) on 90.1 FM and <http://www.cjsf.ca/listen/listen.m3u> . Info and archived shows at <http://www.hiscifi.com/index.php?cat=Show> .

6:30 p.m.: **BIFF** (formerly F.A.N.S.) - Watch videos, and generally hang out every Friday night until closing at: Eighties Restaurant, 110 West 14th Street, North Vancouver. See biff.digitaldoodles.com for more details.

7:00 p.m.: **COME TO FRED!** every Friday from 7 till whenever, **now meeting at Boston Pizza on Broadway near Granville**, Vancouver, BC - a casual drop-in gathering of fans for conversation. (*Still looking at new venues for the long term*)

Saturday

Kamloops Anime Club (<http://www.geocities.com/kamloopsanimeclub/>) holds its main meetings on Saturdays from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. downstairs at High Octane Comics & Collectibles, 250 3rd Avenue, Kamloops.

Monthly Events

Second Tuesday

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Okanagan Centre (<http://www.ocrasc.ca/>) meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 in the Science Building at Okanagan College on KLO Road, Kelowna. (Note that the Vernon and Kelowna meetings are occasionally combined, so check the schedule on the RASC: Okanagan Centre web site if you are planning to attend.)

Second Wednesday

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Victoria Centre (<http://victoria.rasc.ca/>) meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m., in the Elliott Lecture Theatre, Room 060, University of Victoria. (Note that the meeting times and locations are occasionally different, so check the schedule on the RASC: Victoria Centre web site if you are planning to attend.)

Second Thursday

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Vancouver Centre (<http://www.pcis.com/rascvan/>) meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m., downstairs in the auditorium of the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre, 1100 Chestnut Street, Vancouver. Each meeting usually has a program which is a blend of current astronomical research and local amateur activities. The meeting is followed by an informal gathering at the Gordon MacMillan Southam Observatory for coffee, cookies and conversation. Visitors are welcome to attend most meetings, which are free.

Third Wednesday

The Vancouver Electric Vehicle Association (<http://www.veva.bc.ca/>) meets on the third Wednesday of each month (except July and August) from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., in the cafeteria of the Electrical SE1 Building at BCIT.

Last Wednesday

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Okanagan Centre (<http://www.ocrasc.ca/>) meets on the last Wednesday of the month at 7:15 p.m. at the Okanagan Science Centre, 2704 Highway 6, Vernon. (Note that the Vernon and Kelowna meetings are occasionally combined, so check the schedule on the RASC: Okanagan Centre web site if you are planning to attend.)

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Prince George Centre (<http://www.vts.bc.ca/pgrasc/>) meets on the last Wednesday of the month from August to November and January to May from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Prince George Astronomical Observatory (20 km South West of Prince George near West Lake on Tedford Road.) Topics of discussion include astronomy viewing tips, constellations, star charts, photography and much more. The meetings are informal and visitors are welcome.

ON THIS DATE IN FANNISH HISTORY

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| September 2 | J.R.R. Tolkien died in Oxford, England, on this date in 1973. |
| September 6 | Loncon I, the 15th World Science Fiction Convention, and the first to be held outside North America, opened on this date in 1957. |
| September 8 | "The Man Trap" was the first episode of <i>Star Trek</i> broadcast, on this date in 1966. |
| September 10 | The pilot episode of <i>The X-Files</i> first aired on this date in 1993. |
| September 14 | Walter Koenig (<i>Star Trek: Chekhov</i>) was born in Chicago, IL, USA on this date in 1936. |
| September 18 | George MacDonald died at his daughter's home in Ashted, Surrey, England, on this date in 1905. |
| September 19 | Damon Knight, who was Guest of Honour at Westercon 30, was born on this date in 1922. |

- Ofeq 1*, the first Israeli satellite, was launched atop a Shavit rocket on this date in 1988.
- September 20 "The Train Job", the first episode of *Firefly* to be broadcast, was first aired on the Fox network on this date in 2002.
- According to the movie *Serenity*, Malcolm Reynolds will be born on this date in 2468.
- September 21 H.G. Wells was born in Bromley, Kent, England, on this date in 1866.
- Fancouver was formed on this date in 2005.
- September 23 Neptune was first observed on this date in 1846, on the basis of calculations by Urbain Le Verrier and John Couch Adams, which predicted a planet beyond the orbit of Uranus because of perturbations in Uranus' orbit.
- September 27 "Bushwhacked" first aired on this date in 2002.
- September 28 "The Gathering", the first episode of *Highlander*, first aired on this date in 1992.
- September 29 *Alouette I*, the first Canadian-built satellite, was launched atop an American Thor-Agena rocket on this date in 1962.
- Mike Melvill piloted *SpaceShipOne* above the 100 kilometre altitude threshold in the first of two flights required to win the Ansari X Prize on this date in 2004.
- September 30 *Serenity* opened in North America on this date in 2005.

From Greg Slade (August 20, 2006)

FRED: A Fannish Legend

(from *BCSFazine* #200, Jan. 1990)

by Don H. DeBrandt

FRED is one of those fans that everyone seems to know and who seems to know everyone, yet no one can remember his last name. As near as anyone can recall, he's been around for at least ten years, and in that time a legend has sprung up: The Legend of FRED. To refer to it as a legend is not strictly accurate, for everything you have ever heard about FRED is true. Yes, even that rumour about Vander Zalm's brain surgery and the frozen tofu. FRED is more than just a fan; he's the ultimate fan, by day a librarian-mannered intellectual afflicted with thirty-seven allergies and limited social skills, by night a crazed, impulse-driven multiple-personality with a fetish for strange costumes, obscene filksongs and violent games of chance. At once convention, Con Humdrum I believe, he arrived with a U-haul full of costumes, registered under a hundred and twenty different names and changed his identity every half-hour.

FRED defines the word UNIQUE; I am proud to call him my friend. The only time I ever see him is Friday nights at the Best Western Inn, where, depending on his mood, he will either engage in thoughtful discussions on philosophy, science, and the nature of Mankind, or see if

he can drink Tequila Fizzes through his nose. But one thing is for certain - on Friday night, he is always there. I've talked to many people about FRED, and they say many things. Some of them don't make any sense, but Fred tends to have that effect on people. Some of them make a lot of sense but are very pornographic, and are omitted here.

I talked to William "Call Me Bill" Affleck-Asch-Lowe, whom Fred has always been envious of - Fred having no last name and William having three. He spoke of Fred's generosity, saying "Yea, though I crawl through the valley of pubs, I shall fear no bar tab, for I have faith in Fred!" Evelyn Beheshti, when pressed for an anecdote, murmured "Playing strip imaginary blackjack with Robsonkeller coasters has been a memorable experience ..." and would say no more. Spider Robinson, upon reflection, said "Women want toasted ice," and R. Graeme Cameron, in a completely different statement in no way to be construed as a reply, said "To state the obvious is to state the obvious." A person identified only as The Official Minneapolis Beet Fairy has referred to Fred as "large enough to make one bridge table or one polo team - fortunately I play neither bridge nor polo, which spares us the temptation to send out for a deck of cards (or four horses)", a comment which gives you some idea of Fred's size. Another unidentified fan said of Fred, "Froth is top of pile, worth more than 2,000 years," a remark both concise and profound. Michael Dean claims Fred as a major influence on his life: "My New Year's resolution was to drink too much, smoke too much, and drive too fast. Thanks to Fred, I have fulfilled that goal."

I think the two testimonials that touched me the most though, that really stood out and I'll always remember, were by Larry Reid and someone else. Some guy with long hair and glasses, or was it a woman? Anyway, he or she said, and I quote - well, maybe it isn't an exact quote, I forgot to write it down, but this is the gist of it - "Not a thousand doorknobs are semi-alive with fabric ... kits require Billy goats and mush ... up the doughnut howitzer grout. Go away." Heartwarming, isn't it? And lastly, I think Larry summed Fred (and this article) up perfectly when he said, "Why are you wasting time reading this? Drink! Drink! Drink!!!"

Conventions

"You will attend a party where strange customs prevail."
(Chinese fortune cookie)

September 2006

Sept. 8 - 10: **STAR TREK 40th Anniversary Gala Celebration and Conference** - Seattle, Washington (Star Trek Media)

Sept. 10: **Vancouver Comicon** at the Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street (Main & 15th Ave.), Vancouver, BC. Special Guests: Michael T. Gilbert, comics historian, creator of *Mr Monster*; artist on *Elric*, *American Splendor*; writer on *Donald Duck*; Janet Gilbert, writer on *Uncle Scrooge*, *Donald Duck*, *Walt Disney Treasures: 75 Years of Innovation*, *Happy Hustle High*; Kelly Everaert, creator of *Jungle Tales*, *Trilogy of Terror*; Robin Thompson, creator of *Champions of Hell*, *Li'l Natas*; Ken Boesem, creator of *The Village*; Jason Pultz, creator of *scarybear & Friends*; Verne Andru, creator of *420*; artist on *Rock and Rule*; Critical Hit Comics. Dealer Tables: \$45/wall; \$35/centre. Admission: \$3.00; Kids under 14: free. For more information, email lswong@uniserve.com, call 604-322-6412 or see <http://mypages.uniserve.com/~lswong/Comicon.html>

Sept. 22-24: **Foolscap VIII** at the Sheraton Bellevue Hotel in Bellevue, WA. GoH: C.J. Cherryh. Kage Baker regrets she cannot attend. A flat-paper-stuff convention, featuring artshow, dealers' room, programming, a banquet at \$26 a head. Room rates about \$85/nite; contact Bellevue Sheraton, 100 112th Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA 98004-5817; tel (425) 455-3330; fax (425) 451-2473. Memberships: \$50 to September 21, \$60 at the door to Foolscap, c/o Little Cat Z, POBox 2461, Seattle, WA 98111-2461, or via PayPal to treasurer@foolscapcon.org; URL www.foolscapcon.org.

Sept. 30 - October 1: **Robothon** - Seattle Center - Seattle, Washington (Robots-related event)

October 2006

Oct. 6-8: **VCON 31** at the Executive Airport Plaza Hotel, Richmond, B.C. GoHs: Writer GoH Barbara Hambly; ArtGoH, Lynne Taylor Fahnestalk; FanGoH: Randy McCharles. Toastmaster: Michael Walsh. Chair: Clint Budd. The Gaming Room will be run by the Vancouver Gaming Guild. (In fact, they are running their Cloud City Gaming Extravaganza at the con.) three daily themes: Master Classes in Genre Fiction Writing on Friday, Green Science on Saturday, and Media on Sunday. BIFF will not be held at its usual location; there are plans to have a BIFF table in the Dealers' Room, and member Val is looking for stock and volunteers to make the table a success. Adult memberships: until Sept. 15, \$50; at the door, \$60. Child in Tow rate: half adult; Tot in Tow, free. (A child in tow is 7-12, and a tot in tow is 6 and under.) Daily Memberships: Friday only, \$30; Saturday, \$35; Sunday, \$25. Registrar: Howard Cherniack, #302 - 1330 Graveley Street, Vancouver, BC V5L 3A2, tel. (604) 255-0796, email clintbudd@dccnet.com. See also www.v-con.ca.

Oct. 6 - 8: **CreepCon 2006** - Eugene, Oregon (horror related convention with a media emphasis)

Oct 7: **24 Hour Comics Day**. More info at <http://www.24hourcomics.com/>

Oct. 8: **Portland Comic Book Show** - Portland, Oregon (reportedly Oregon's largest Comic Book Convention. Held twice a year in Portland, Oregon)

Oct. 13 - 14: **SciFan** - Lynnwood, Washington (Northwest's Premier Science Fiction Fantasy Modeling Event)

Oct. 13-15: **Anglicon 18** at the Holiday Inn Seattle Airport, Seattle, WA. GoHs: Virginia Hey (*Farscape*); Heather Alexander; Phil & Kaja Foglio (Studio Foglio); Pamela Salem (of Dr. Who fame: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0758012/>); Michael O'Hagan (her lovely and talented husband: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0641149/>). Rooms: Write Holiday Inn Seattle Airport, 17338 International Blvd., Seattle, WA 98188, tel (206) 248-1000. Memberships \$25 prereg, \$50 at the door. Write Anglicon 18, PO Box 75536, Seattle, WA 98175-0536; tel (206) 789-2748; email angliconinfo@yahoo.com, or see www.anglicon.com.

Oct 14-15: **Con*Cept 2006** at the Days Hotel, Montréal, Québec, Canada. Info: email: conceptsff@conceptsff.ca; website: www.conceptsff.ca

Oct. 17 – 22: **The Vancouver International Writers Festival** - Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada (premiere literary events, held annually over 6 days in late October. It was inaugurated in 1988 as the brainchild of founding Artistic Director Alma Lee)

Oct. 22: **Model, Toy and Collectables Show** at the Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street (Main & 15th Ave.), Vancouver, BC. Dealer Tables: \$45/wall; \$35/centre. Admission: \$3.00 Kids under 14: free. For more information, email lswong@uniserve.com, call 604-322-6412 or see <http://mypages.uniserve.com/~lswong/Comicon.html>

Oct. 26 – 28: **Con-Fusion** - Victoria, BC, Canada (Gaming)

November 2006

Nov. 2-5: **World Fantasy Con 2006** at the Renaissance Hotel at the Arboretum, Austin, TX. GoHs: Glen Cook and Dave Duncan, TM: Bradley Denton, Editor GoH: Glenn Lord, Artist GoHs: John Jude Palencar, Gary Gianni. Reservations: 9721 Arboretum Blvd., Austin, TX 78759 (512) 343-2626. Memberships TBA??. World Fantasy, c/o FACT Inc., POBox 27277, Austin, TX 78755, email wfcinfo@fact.org, or see www.fact.org/wfc2006/

Nov. 4 – 6: **AmberConNW** - Troutdale, Oregon (Amber related role playing convention)

Nov. 5: **Vancouver Comicon** at the Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street (Main & 15th Ave.), Vancouver, BC. Dealer Tables: \$45/wall; \$35/centre. Admission: \$3.00 Kids under 14: free. For more information, email lswong@uniserve.com, call 604-322-6412 or see <http://mypages.uniserve.com/~lswong/Comicon.html>

Nov. 17-19: **Orycon 28** at the Portland Marriott Waterfront, Portland, Oregon. Guests of Honor: Editor: [Ellen Datlow](#); Writer: [Cory Doctorow](#) Membership rates are \$45 to Oct. 31; \$55 thereafter and at the door. Children age 6-12 are half price. Children 5 and under are free. Children must be accompanied by an adult with a membership. To transfer a membership, send a signed letter to the convention PO box (below) with the new member's name and address. Mail registration to: Orycon 28 PO Box 5464 Portland, OR 97228-5464, USA. URL: www.orycon.org

December 2006

Dec 1-3: **SMOFCon 24** at the Hotel Phillips, Kansas City MO. The convention-runner's con. Info: www.smofcon.org

January 2007

Jan. 12-14: **Rustycon 24** in Seattle, WA. Memberships \$25. See www.rustycon.com

February 2007

Feb. 24: Noon to 9:00 p.m. ?? UAA Student Union, Anchorage, Alaska (Anime - please note that their web site is under construction, but there is a link to a forum where you can find out more))

March 2007

Mar. 9-11: **Potlatch 16** at the Red Lion Hotel Portland Convention Center, Portland, OR. Memberships TBA. Information: Potlatch 16, c/o OSFCI, Box 5703, Portland, OR 97228-5703; tel. (503) 283-0802; email potlatch16@gmail.com; URL www.spiritone.com/~jlorentz/potlatch

Mar. 16 - 18: **Anime Oasis V** - Boise, Idaho (anime)

Mar. 24: **Nishikaze III** - Lethbridge, Alberta (anime)

Mar. 29 - Apr. 1: **World Horror Convention 2007** at the Toronto Marriott Downtown Eaton Centre, Toronto, ON. GoHs: Michael Marshall Smith, Nancy Kilpatrick. ArtGoH: John Picacio. MC: Sephera Giron. Publisher GoH: Peter Crowther. Editor GoH: Don Hutchison. Email Amanda@whc2007.org; URL www.whc2007.org.

Mar. 30 - April 1: **Gamestorm** - Portland, Oregon (gaming)

Mar. 31 - April 1: **Fifth Annual Emerald City ComicCon** - Seattle, Washington (Comics)

April 2007

Apr. 5 - 8: **Norwescon 30** - SeaTac, Washington (The premiere northwest regional general science fiction convention)

Apr. 6 - 8: **SakuraCon 2007** - Seattle, Washington (Sakura-Con is the premier Pacific Northwest Anime Convention devoted to East Asian Culture, with a particular focus on Japanese animation (anime), Japanese Comics (manga), and video gaming)

May 2007

May 19 - 20: **OtaFest** - Calgary, Alberta, Canada (Anime)

May 20: **Eugene Comic Book and Collectible Show** - Eugene, Oregon (Comics)

May 25 - 28: **Miscon 21** - Missoula, Montana (Miscon comes of age :-). Full spectrum science fiction/fantasy/horror convention)

June 2007

June 22 - 29: **SeaTrek 2007** - Starts and ends in Seattle with the middle in the Pacific Ocean (Cruise based science fiction media convention - check their web site for details on this cruise based con and others)

July 2007

July 6-8: **Robert A. Heinlein Centennial** at Hyatt Regency Crown Center /

Westin Crown Center, Kansas City MO. Memb: \$125 to 5/1/07, then \$150 (checks to Heinlein Centennial Inc.). Info: Heinlein Centennial, Inc., Box 4313, Citrus Heights CA 95611; email: Info@HeinleinCentennial.com; website: www.heinleincentennial.com

September 2007

Sept. 27 - 30: **Bouchercon 2007** - Anchorage, Alaska (Mystery related but also with some SF influence on occasion)

October 2007

Oct. 14 - 16: **Sci Fan** - Lynnwood, Washington (Premiere Science Fiction Modeling Convention)

Just About What It Has Come To

NEW YORK - A public school teacher was arrested today at John F. Kennedy International Airport as he attempted to board a flight while in possession of a ruler, a protractor, a set square, a slide rule, and a calculator.

At a morning press conference, Attorney General John Ashcroft said he believes the man is a member of the notorious Al-gebra movement. He did not identify the man, who has been charged by the FBI with carrying weapons of math instruction.

"Al-gebra is a problem for us," Ashcroft said. "They desire solutions by means and extremes, and sometimes go off on tangents in a search of absolute value. They use secret code names like 'x' and 'y' and refer to themselves as 'unknowns,' but we have determined they belong to a common denominator of the axis of medieval with coordinates in every country. As the Greek philanderer Isosceles used to say, 'There are 3 sides to every triangle.' "

When asked to comment on the arrest, President Bush said, "If God had wanted us to have better Weapons of Math Instruction, He would have given us more fingers and toes." White House aides told reporters they could not recall a more intelligent or profound statement by the president.

Brad & Sue Luoma, August 10, 2006

The Theory of WAP

(reprinted from *BCSFazine* 338, July 2006)

by Willy Devine & Meaty Fontana

“Wap” is dependent upon the number and consistency of neuro-sensory connections. Neuro-sensory connections consist of the generalizing effect of receptors, being attached to neurons. These neurons cascade down to every cell in every tissue of the body, in the order of brain and body complexity, and form a communications web called consciousness. Each pigeonhole is a finite combination of site-specific data, interpreted using an ancient conscious communications network (brain and body), and shaped by the effect of previous experience (time). Previous experiences are site-specific, and their resolution is dependent upon the speed of communication amongst the tissues of the body. This speed of communication is a readily measurable variable, and seems to be highly correlated with the many physical and physiological variables present at the site of experience. There is a period of time between when something happens and when the brain and body interprets it - we call this time variable *Wap*.

$Wap = \text{time (of realization)} - \text{time (of the event)}$

$Wap = t r - t e$

$z = t r - t e$

Examples of WAP:

Fast Wap: Punch to the head (you know pretty darn fast after it happens, unless it knocked you out, then it could be a while before you know)

Average Wap: The time it takes the average person to get a joke.

Slow Wap: The time it takes the average person to understand quantum theory.

Infinitely Slow Wap: The time it takes the average person to understand the universe.

Negative Wap: Knowing what is going to happen before it happens (theoretically possible)

(conveyed to us by Greg Cairns)

The Great Chain of Fandom

By Garth Spencer

A NEBULA-WINNING WRITER

Leaps tall buildings in a single bound,
Is more powerful than a locomotive,
Is faster than a speeding bullet,
Walks on water,
Gives policy to God.

A HUGO-WINNING WRITER

Leaps short buildings in a single bound,
Is more powerful than a shunting engine,

Is just as fast as a speeding bullet,
Walks on water if sea is calm,
Talks with God.

A CONVENTION CHAIR

Leaps short buildings with a running start and favourable winds,
Is almost as powerful as a shunting engine,
Is almost as fast as a speeding bullet,
Walks on water in an indoor swimming pool,
Talks with God if special permission is approved.

A FANEDITOR

Barely clears the bicycle shed,
Loses a tug-of-war with a locomotive,
Can fire a speeding bullet,
Swims very well,
Is sometimes addressed by God.

A GOFER

Runs into buildings,
Recognizes locomotives,
Is not issued ammunition,
Can stay afloat with a lifejacket,
Talks to walls.

A HOTEL CONFERENCE MANAGER

Falls over doorsteps when trying to enter buildings,
Says "look at the choo-choo!",
Wets himself with a water pistol,
Drowns in large puddles,
Mumbles to himself.

AN SF CLUB/CONVENTION SECRETARY

Lifts buildings and walks under them,
Kicks locomotives off the tracks,
Catches flying bullets in her teeth and eats them,
Freezes water with a single glance,
IS God.

The Daily Planet: Remembering Booster Gold

End of a "Golden Age: Hero Booster Gold Dies
by Troy Brownfield, Special to *The Daily Planet*

Mere weeks after the tragic devastation that was wrought in Metropolis, the city, and the world, have been dealt another blow. Booster Gold, the sometimes-controversial hero and media personality, has died. Reports are still sketchy, but it appears that Gold was exposed to a

lethal dose of radiation after lifting the unidentified nuclear sub that was carried in on the back of what appeared to be a mutated nudibranch in midtown earlier today. Though the resultant explosion of the sub was reportedly at a safe distance to prevent radiation exposure to the city, Gold, who was on the sub's conn tower took the full brunt of the explosion.

According to eyewitnesses, Gold's body was recovered by Supernova, and carried to the ground. Though many expressed hope when first seeing Gold's body in the new hero's arms, it could quickly be seen that while Gold's body was protected by his uniform, his head was grievously injured, apparently burned to the bone in the explosion.

Like many before him, Gold went down fighting, but he'll perhaps be remembered best as a figure that brought humor, smiles, and occasionally, frustration, to the ranks of super-heroes.

Gold began his heroic career in spectacular fashion: after reportedly arriving in our time from the distant future, he saved the life of the President of the United States from a super-assassin. Whereas many heroes would simply nod, wave, and fly off into the sunset at a job well done, Gold took the curious step of embracing his celebrity. He became a commercial pitchman. He signed lucrative media deals. He was a hero, yet he used that profile for capitalistic gain.

Supernova carried the body of Gold to the ground, following the explosion.

In many senses, Gold was a forerunner of the mercenary mentality that now pervades professional sports. Ironic, then, that reports have indicated that Gold may have been a collegiate athlete in his own time. Other records of Gold's personal life are, at best, unreliable, but we do know that he had a sister who adventured under the heroic identity of Goldstar. Unfortunately, she passed on several years ago, also killed in action.

As Gold's own star began to rise, he was recruited by Maxwell Lord into the Justice League. The group had recently reformed after the so-called "Legends Riots" precipitated by pedagogue G. Gordon Godfrey. After halting a hostage crisis and making an incursion into Russia to prevent a nuclear meltdown, the League met Gold at their headquarters. Though initially put off by Lord's insistence that the League add the young hero, they later welcomed him with open arms after he was instrumental in defeating a new Royal Flush Gang in full view of the press.

It was during that first scuffle alongside the League that Booster began one of the defining relationships with his life, his friendship with the late Blue Beetle. Blue Beetle and Booster Gold became one of the most beloved partnerships in super-heroics; though the rest of the League weren't always enamored of their antics, the public found in quite refreshing that there were heroes out there who would make jokes, and sometimes, very human mistakes.

Ray Russell, webmaster for the fan club, "Gold's Boosters," told us, "Booster and Beetle in the League were just great. Sure, Superman can lift buildings, but very few heroes would build a casino and resort on a moving island. How could you not love those guys?"

Russell of course refers to "Blue and Gold's" investment into the short-lived "Club JLI" on the island of Kooey Kooey Kooey in the South Pacific. Though the debacle resulted in several lawsuits and engendered the scorn of many in the super-hero community, followers of the two heroes still regard it as a highlight of their careers. That event, they seem to say, shows them that sometimes, the heroes can be just as, well, outright goofy as the rest of us can be.

Gold also suffered through the indignity of being labeled a traitor early in his League tenure. After his fortune was stolen through the machinations of corrupt manager Dirk Davis, Gold was believed to be acting in collusion with the Manhunter Cult. Eventually, it was revealed that Gold was attempting to infiltrate the Cult. Though he got no credit for it at the time, Gold actually prevented the detonation of a doomsday device at the Earth's core. After things were sorted out, Gold returned to the League.

The good times didn't last forever, though. After another reorganization of the League, Blue Beetle and Booster Gold found themselves alongside several of their old teammates and new leader Superman. What should have been a new level of glory soon ended in tears. The creature known as Doomsday emerged and cut a swath of destruction across the country. Of course, the League intervened.

Before the day was over, Superman would lie lifeless in the middle of Metropolis. And though he would later return, the repercussions of that event perhaps overshadowed the sacrifices made by others. Blue Beetle nearly died, and in fact was left in a lengthy coma. Booster Gold, a hero who relied on devices rather than any powers of his own, also nearly made the ultimate sacrifice. Though he survived the battle in better shape than his best friend, Gold's equipment was destroyed, momentarily ending his heroic career.

And maybe this is where we should stop and examine Gold. Many times, he could have walked away. Many times, he could have turned back to his fame, to his potential for fortune outside the adventuring arena. And yet he kept going back. Was it honor? Duty? The thought that he could make more money if he just kept going? Whatever it was, Gold refused to stay out of harm's way.

That was underscored when the Overmaster attacked Earth. Gold, recently returned to the League using equipment designed by his recovered friend, Blue Beetle, actually led the initial charge against the extraterrestrial invader. Gold was severely injured, even losing an arm in battle. Fellow Leaguer Ice later died fighting the same menace.

For his part, Blue Beetle, ever there for his friend, made Gold yet another suit and a cybernetic arm. Gold commented publicly to *The Daily Planet* at the time, "Good friends give you a hand; best friends give you an arm." Yes, we may groan, but the smile sold it.

Gold and Beetle joined a brief offshoot of the League, nicknamed "Extreme Justice". Due to private circumstances, Gold returned to his more traditional outfit. At a charity event later that year, questions about Gold's sartorial change were met with the following remark: "Well, basically, I made a deal with a time-traveling villain and stripped down my futuristic robot pal to make it work." The media present laughed, but Gold himself looked puzzled, almost as if he were surprised that the press didn't buy yet another one of his witty quips.

Gold's profile dimmed for a while. It was reported that he briefly dated the super-heroine Firehawk. Some public records suggested that he may have married a much older woman named Gladys [*Last Name Withheld at Request of Family*], though the factuality of those reports has been disputed. Similarly, other records seem to indicate that Gold joined Blue Beetle, Maxwell Lord, and other heroes in an organization called "Super Buddies," a sort of "heroes for rent" operation, but strangely, most of those records seem to have been expunged.

More recently, Gold quit adventuring for a time after the violent death of Sue Dibny, the wife of hero Ralph Dibny, The Elongated Man. The times, it seemed, were getting too dark for the jovial prankster of the hero set. They would get darker.

Gold went back to his costume to help his friend, Blue Beetle, in a complex investigation. While helping Beetle perform research, Gold was seriously injured in an explosion. He was in a hospital bed when his long-time best friend was murdered by their former teammate, Maxwell Lord. Lord himself would die at the hands of Wonder Woman, itself a controversial act, seen around the world, that is still being debated.

When he had recovered enough to begin investigating Beetle's disappearance, Gold gathered several of his former teammates together. Reports conflict, but most say that it was Gotham City's mysterious urban crusader Batman who revealed Beetle's death to Gold. One can only imagine what that did to the happy-go-lucky, fame-seeking hero. Over the next several days, Gold and his group engaged the rampaging OMACs in battle; heroine Fire was

seriously injured, and the hero known as Rocket Red, another former teammate, also lost his life during the struggle.

We all recall too well the days of absolute chaos that followed. The city of Bludhaven was victimized by a chemical bombing. Metropolis burned as heroes and villains fought pitched battles in the streets. And when it was over, the world had...changed. Scientists and scholars still try to sort it out, but we somehow know that things aren't exactly the same.

During a clean-up operation, Mr. Terrific, chairman of the Justice Society of America, spoke about Booster Gold. He said, "This has been a traumatic time. We've lost friends, loved ones. But you can really see the character of people in this situation. Like Booster Gold. We had a job to do, up there in orbit, and that guy really showed me something that day."

In the days after, Gold returned to his former ways: wearing sponsorships on his outfit like a NASCAR driver, and grandstanding in public after defeating menaces. And the public loved it. After the dark days before, it was good to have a hero like Booster Gold, smiling, waving, signing autographs. Booster Gold, ultimately, meant fun.

Sadly, that collapsed too. As revealed by minor actor Bob Castell and Gold's former teammate Dibny, Gold had actually financed some of the menaces himself; creating disasters so that he might play the hero. While it's inarguable that Gold has done a lot of good, the recent act severely damaged his image with the public.

And now, here we are. Standing at the graveside of another dead hero. We'd ask Gold's best friends what he meant to them, but so many have already passed. Ice, Blue Beetle, Rocket Red...all casualties in what this paper likes to refer to as "a never-ending battle." It's true that sometimes, Booster Gold didn't hold up the heroic standard. He was an opportunist. He was a player. He was rarely serious. And he liked to live his life in front of the cameras. And while the pro athletes (as he almost was) are lionized for this behavior, Gold was often frowned upon.

Still, there's a segment of the public, his truest fans, who see a different Booster. They see a man who was willing to smile. They see a man who loved his friends. They see a man who, armed only with enormous confidence and occasionally unreliable gadgets, went back repeatedly into harm's way. He faced down a menace that nearly killed Superman. He lost an arm, and still came back. He fought killer robots and went into space and saved the life of the President.

By any measure, Booster Gold was flawed. But by any measure, Booster Gold was also a hero. Rest in peace, Booster Gold. If there truly is any justice on Earth or in Heaven, you and Blue Beetle are having a drink, eying a couple of seraphim and trying to figure out if the Afterlife allows you to run a game of cards. You will be missed, Booster Gold. And when we think about you, we promise to smile.

Forwarded by Felicity Walker, August 18, 2006



Cider: Our Friend and Yours

(first published in The Daily Blurb, V-Con 17's daily convention zine)

by Don H. DeBrandt

Cider has grown in popularity these last few years, especially in British Columbia. In 1986, we consumed 6,939,000 litres of this tasty beverage, about the same as we had for the previous three years; the next year it jumped to 8,491,112! The reason?

Some say V-Con did it. It's true that this drink, with an alcohol content ranging from four to seven percent, is a perennial favourite with our American visitors, perhaps because until Prohibition, cider was considered the national drink of the U.S. Since then, it has been replaced by other liquids, notably coffee and wine coolers.

Perhaps it's because of our orchards in the Okanagan, which produce fruit with a relatively high acidic content, perfect for concocting this fruit wine. Cider is made from the pulp of apples or pears and fermented in much the same way wine is — there is even a champagne cider, fermented a second time in the bottle.

There are, however, some misconceptions about cider, which should be cleared up. First, flavoured ciders, such as apple-lime or strawberry, are not made from fermented berries or citrus fruits - they have these flavours added to an apple cider base. Other popular flavours include peach, blueberry, root beer and kokanee. The berries used in kokanee cider grow only in the Kootenay mountains, and are sometimes called "sasquatch berries" because of their heavy brown pelt.

Second, the bubbles in cider are not carbon dioxide, as in other sparkling beverages, but methane, which gives cider its distinctive aroma. Trained Smurfs are fed a special diet of burritos and sodium bicarbonate, then added to the fermenting mixture, which they stir briskly by performing synchronized swimming routines from old Ethel Merman pictures. Most Smurfs are good for seven or eight hours before they absorb enough alcohol to go belly up. Don't worry, it isn't as bad as it sounds; at this point they are fished out, dried, shredded, and used as artificial blueberry colouring. Kittens are occasionally added for extra sparkle, flavour, or just for the hell of it. Dead winos that have been found in the gutter and are too smelly to bury are sometimes used to enhance fermentation, and an age-old tradition in the cider business, passed on from father to son, is "straining the vat for spare change". Leper's underwear is ...

(continued on page 82)

AS OTHERS SEE US II

Richard Linklater, maker of the latest Dick-based film, seems to have read a lot of peculiar sf: 'What appealed to me about *A Scanner Darkly* [...] is that it's not really about "the future." It's about Joe Everyman and his pals, worrying about money and sex and being frustrated. A lot of sci-fi deals with these amazing futuristic worlds where humans have suddenly lost all their humour and become emotionless automatons.' (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, 9 Jul) [TM]

Carlton Cuse, executive producer of *Lost*, bows to the King: 'One of my biggest influences was *The Stand* [...] The brilliance was the way it took a sci-fi premise and told a character story.' (*TV Guide*, 24 Jul) [TM]

Ansible 229, August 2006

"Good things are being said about you."
Chinese fortune cookie

Fan Funds

Back when travel was rather more expensive, and fans were rather more involved with reading and writing for fanzines, fans became interested in seeing foreign fans at their conventions; so the first fan funds were born, to select fans to visit each other's countries, turn and turn about. Today there are trans-oceanic funds such as TAFF (the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund), DUFF (the Down Under Fan Fund) - and even intranational funds such as CUFF (the Canadian Unity Fund), to assist Western fans to visit Eastern conventions, and *vice versa*. (More information about CUFF will appear in a fanhistory article next issue.)

TAFF

Bridget Bradshaw is on her US TAFF trip: 'very busy, no downtime - and when I get home I'll be sidling up to you previous winners and asking "So, did you too write a Secret Trip Report of the things which can never be said?"' Such as this black moment in Boulder, CO: 'Attempted a drive-by viewing of the *Mork & Mindy* house but we were on the wrong road.'

TAFF: the 2007 eastbound race nominations deadline is midnight, 9 Sep 2006.

Ansible 229, August 2006

JETS

JETS (Japanese Expeditionary Travel Scholarship) is a one-off fund to take a Eurofan to Nippon 2007 in Japan. Rules are based on TAFF: candidates need four nominators, a 100-word platform, £20 bond, and a pledge to travel if elected. The deadline is 13 Nov 06. Voting will run to 13 Apr 07. Interaction has kick-started the fund with a £1,000 grant. Contact: League of Fan Funds (www.astralpole.org) c/o 59 Shirley Rd, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 7ES. The lucky JETS winner inherits no administrative work, but A Trip Report Is Expected.

Ansible 229, August 2006

Honoured BCSFAns Greatly Missed

By R. Graeme Cameron

SUSAN WOOD -- 27 Aug 1948 to 12 Nov 1980.

Susan was a genuine BNF who won the best fanzine Hugo in 1973 (along with then husband Mike Glicksohn) for the Canadian fanzine *Energumen*. She also won twice for Best Fanwriter. From 1975 on she was Assistant Professor of English at UBC where she taught, among others, William Gibson. She was well known across North America for promoting feminist panels at SF cons, including Westercon XXX. She also devoted much time and effort to VCon, BCSFA, and people she knew in BCSFA. She collapsed from a fatal medicine interaction while on her way to class. Her family donated much of her fanzine collection to BCSFA, where it forms the basis of the current archive. Susan was a rising star, sorely missed by all her friends.

HELENE 'HEN' FLANDERS - 12 July 1944 to 13 Aug 1982.

A popular BCSFAn who joined the club in 1977, she served as *BCSFazine* Editor from issue 57 (Mar 1978) to issue 71 (May 1979). She also served on many VCon committees. She was renowned for her striking costumes at both VCons and club events. Lively, beautiful, and outgoing, it was a terrible shock to everyone who knew her when she was found murdered in her ground floor apartment, a terrible crime which remains unsolved to this very day.

PAUL HOWARD 'S'MOKEY' SIMMS - 11 Jan 1942 to 23 Aug 1991.

Immensely popular BCSFAn, larger than life, active in the club since 1977, who often hosted VCon committee meetings, he was a horrific creator of puns, author of the hilarious 'Smokey's Den' contributions to VANAPA, founder and Dictator For Life of BCSFA NORTH (first in Prince Rupert, then in Campbell River), and host of the legendary S'MOKEY CON ONE. He was especially famed for his gregarious nature and wonderful sense of humour. He passed away after a long, courageous fight against cancer.

SARA 'PEREGRIN' BREARLEY - 1969 to 14 Dec 1994.

Born with Cystic Fibrosis, Sara didn't let this prevent her from earning a B.Sc. in Computer Science at UBC and from enrolling in the Emily Carr College of Art. I can still picture her at numerous FREDs leaning over a table in close consultation with fellow BCSFAn artist/friends like Amy Morgan, Yolanda Goodwin and Warren Oddsson, doodling, sketching, creating art on the ever present notepad, an artist at work in an artist's jam session. She also participated in the 'Barr Wars' with American Artist Donna Barr, and contributed five covers for *BCSFazine*. In April 1993 a double lung transplant gave her more than a year of healthy life before, tragically, she succumbed to rejection. She was our fierce little falcon. Hard to believe she's gone.

EVELYN BEHESHTI HILDEBRANDT - 1962 to 13 Mar 1995.

Joining BCSFA in 1977, she served as Secretary in 1981, worked on the concons of VConS 12, 13, & 17, and was one of the founders of the SF radio show THE ETHER PATROL in May of 1984. She married fellow BCSFAn and well-known author Don H. DeBrandt in 1990.

"HIV-positive for more than eight years, Ev worked selflessly and tirelessly for groups such as B.C. People With AIDS, Oak Tree Clinic, and The Positive Women's Network... personally touring BC schools to spread AIDS awareness... Hundreds attended her memorial;

some sixty of them ended up at my house, telling each other Evelyn stories till dawn... She was simply one of the kindest, sweetest, most loving people I have ever known." – Spider Robinson, *BCSFAzine* #264.

WARREN ODDSSON – Mar 1958 to 14 Aug 2001.

A BCSFAn for over 20 years, Warren was a prolific fan artist noted for his remarkable stippling technique (inspired by Virgil Findlay's work), contributing numerous covers and fillos to *BCSFAzine*, VCon program books, and fanzines devoted to *Sentinel*, *Highlander*, *Star Trek*, *Red Dwarf*, *James Bond*, *Voyager*, and myriad other shows and films. He was Artist Guest of Honour at VCon 19/Westercon 44. (He did the 23 concon portraits in the program book, which he called 'Soul Cages'.) He also did professional work for the Vancouver *Sun* newspaper, a T-Shirt company, and a Canadian Astronaut whose mission logo he designed. Warren was renowned for his dry, 'wicked' sense of humour.

OTHER NEWS

WHITE DWARF CATALOGUES AVAILABLE

"The Summer 2006 (July to Sept) new release catalogues for White Dwarf Books, Science Fiction and Fantasy (<http://www.deadwrite.com/sfg06.html>) and

Dead Write Books, Crime and Mystery (<http://www.deadwrite.com/myg06.html>) are now available online. These are also linked from our main web page:

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

"If you wish, I can email one or both (specify) catalogues in either plain text or html format. We still produce the classic, printed version, which can be picked up at the store (until we run out of them - usually within a month or so).

Walter Bruce Sinclair, July 16, 2006

GOTH HOUSE (The Bellingham Graphic Novel)

"Clarion West is done, and you finally get to see the next two pages of 'Terra Goes to Hell.' (<http://www.gothhouse.org/>)

"Long-term readers will notice the inclusion of a horizontal teaser in addition to the usual vertical teaser. We'll see how this works. Let me know if you hate it, or if you love it. If you say nothing, I'll assume you don't care about it.

"Scroll down the main page to see Paul's updates to the site while I was gone, in case you haven't already.

"See you at Worldcon."

Julie McGalliard, August 5, 2006



SOME MEMBERS' WEBSITES

Canfancylopedia (webmaster: R. Graeme Cameron)

www.canfancylopedia.ca lists a great many names, titles and topics in Canadian fandom, which are gradually receiving semi-encyclopaedic entries. Many, but not all of the entries are of fanzines in Canada's fanhistory.

The Origins of Fandom.ca

By Andrew C. Murdoch

Carol Burnell was a fan on the cutting edge in the 1990s. In addition to her credentials of having chaired conventions and edited fanzines from her home in Texas, she also embraced the wondrous communications possibilities of computers. She ran a dial-up bulletin board system in the early days, then began exploring the internet with the advent of the World Wide Web. Her fan websites devoted to some of her favourite television SF and fantasy television programs drew hits and grew to great size, particularly her site devoted to *Xena: Warrior Princess*. In July 2000, she decided to put all her efforts together into one website, and registered a domain name fitting for television SF fandom: *fandom.tv*.

Then, in October of that year, she received a cease-and-desist letter.

She had not received it from one of the studios whose intellectual property she was paying homage to on her website, but from a company called Fandom, Inc. This company had set up a year earlier, using the domain name *fandom.com*, and ironically had started as a company dedicated to protecting the fair use of copyrighted materials by fans on not-for-profit websites. Fandom, Inc. was most definitely for profit, however, as it sold merchandise and advertising on their web site in the common business model of the day that led to so many on-paper millionaires. Indeed, it seemed to be working for them, too. In the short time Fandom, Inc. has been operating they had acquired movie fan magazine *Cinescape* and for-profit convention/merchandising organization Creation.

Fandom, Inc. accused Burnell of violating U.S. anti-cybersquatting laws (despite that she was actively using the domain name), at a potential penalty of U.S.\$10,000. But the most controversial of their accusations was that she was infringing on their trademark of the word "fandom". Fandom, Inc. threatened to sue to the full extent of the law on the matter, but made the generous offer to cease legal action and pay Burnell U.S.\$250 if she turned over control of

the domain name immediately. (As legal action dragged on and Burnell resisted, the offer went up to U.S.\$1,500.)

Fandom, Inc.'s legal challenge was, ultimately, without merit. It hinged on the notion that they owned a trademark on the word "fandom", and while the company did indeed have a pending application on file (as found through the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's website), it had, in fact, failed once already. The reason was simple: fandom was a word in common usage, and had been for almost a century. The word first appeared in *Webster's Dictionary* in 1903, referring then to fans of baseball.

Ironically, the Internet, through various e-mail lists, became the medium through which much of the discussion on the subject took place. Although efforts were, predictably, quite scattered, there was no lack of a central point of information amongst online fans. In fact, there were two mailing lists discussing the subject: the Memory Hole mailing list, populated primarily by fanzine fans, and Fandom Fights Back, another mailing list arising specifically from this incident.

Some fans decided to do more than just talk, however. Talk arose on both mailing lists about securing other domain names in other jurisdictions and top-level domains that contained the word "fandom". Mike Lowrey of the United Kingdom was the first fan to do so, registering the domains fandom.co.uk and fandom.org.uk. That was when I first put forth the notion of someone in Canadian fandom registering its Canadian equivalent: fandom.ca.

The Canadian Internet Registration Authority indicated that the domain name was unregistered and available, and I dutifully reported this back through the mailing lists. Unfortunately, domain name registration could tend to be expensive, as much as CDN\$100 per year. I suggested a group ownership of the domain, shared among several fans, as a compromise.

As there was little or no response, I forged ahead. I found what, at the time, was the least expensive registration service, and registered fandom.ca in my own name on 29 November 2000. Since, at the time, I was unable to afford hosting and create an actual web site using the domain, I offered to lease it back to the fannish community, at my cost, to anyone wanting to actually create a website with it. (I also offered a rate for fandom.com: U.S.\$10,000 per year, in five-year increments, payable in full in advance.)

Ironically, shortly after registering fandom.ca, I received e-mail from another person saying he had wanted to register the name. Though not associated with Fandom, Inc., he indicated he was going to use it for a commercial web site. He had ultimately settled for fandomnorth.ca.

In 2001, a great number of dot-coms whose business models revolved around selling advertising failed to live up to the hype of their Initial Public Offerings. As a result, the businesses themselves also failed when they found their focused audience couldn't compete with giants such as Yahoo, who had broad appeal. Fandom, Inc. became one of those casualties. In late March, 2001, the company declared bankruptcy. Creation Conventions returned to being a separate entity, and the remaining assets of the company, including *Cinescape* magazine and the fandom.com website, were bought by Mania Entertainment LLC. Mania Entertainment continues to run both to this day, and fortunately seems not to have resumed the efforts to take over other sites with the word "fandom" in them.

As a final insult to injury, however, the dissolution of Fandom, Inc. left Carol Burnell with a U.S.\$1,500 legal bill, and no one to recoup those costs from. Fans, however, did not forget, and took up a collection to help defray her costs from her battle, and victory, over the company.

In 2002, I took the plunge. I paid for a hosting package from a web hosting firm in Saskatoon, and began to actually put a website up. Although, unfortunately, time, life and other interests have kept me from developing the site to its fullest potential, I feel it does now

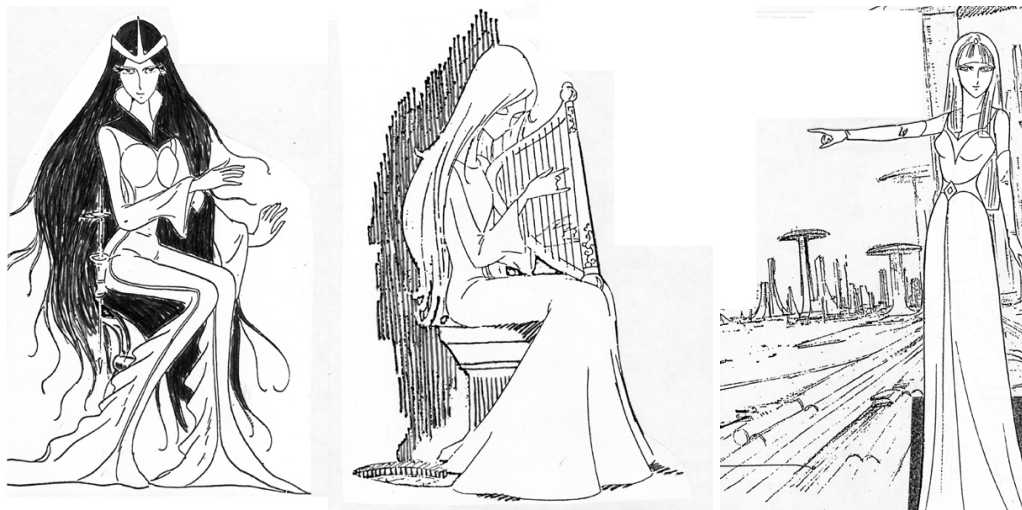
contain news as I can get it, as well as records of awards, a large list of links, and a forum. As with all community websites, I'm always open to submissions of news or other information, and intend to remain so for the foreseeable future.

Royal Swiss Navy (webmaster: Garth Spencer)

www.vcn.bc.ca/sig/rsn is the first of the amateur websites Garth set up after 1996. At the time, the Vancouver CommunityNet only hosted community groups, so Garth invented the *Royal Swiss Navy*, being inspired by Discordianism, Monty Python, and by the names some fan groups took on. As the founder puts it, "The *Royal Swiss Navy* is not royal, it is not Swiss, and it does not float." The online handbook explains that Canada is secretly a colony of Scotland, Americans are all really German, and it isn't enough to say men are from Mars and women are from Venus - we're all reincarnated aliens, from over a thousand different species. (Garth is on medication and he's feeling much better now.)

At various times Garth's comic crank theories and his suggestions for public comedy routines have entertained or bored or perhaps offended fans, in Vancouver and elsewhere. The RSN website not only hosts *The Royal Swiss Navy Handbook*, and early issues of *The Royal Swiss Navy Gazette*, but some reference information on conrunning. He plans to archive his fanwriting online, some of which has appeared in *BCSFAzine*.

"It takes a NEWFIE to steal a parking lot!"—Fruvous



KAFFEEKLATSCH

(reprinted from *BCSFAzine*, July 2005)

Appearing June 25, 2005 *only* at Garth Spencer's place. Featuring Joe Devoy, "Cosmic" Ray Seredin, Michael "Fruvous" Bertrand, Doug Finnerty, and a special appearance by Barb Dryer.

A meandering discussion of Basic English, the history of language, of Australia, and of stupid criminals was followed by...

1. *If you could bring one well-known person from the past to the present, who would he/she be, and why?*

Garth asked, “to *where?*” His preference was to hoik Sir John A. MacDonald—the man who *invented* Canada—into a contemporary Parliament, preferably when he’s sloshed. Fruvous voted for Mark Twain, just to see his take on the contemporary world. (“Same old same old?” somebody muttered.) Garth pointed out how consistently the remakes of *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court* miss the whole point of Twain’s novel. Barb pointed out that the most recent remake of *Gulliver’s Travels*, with Ted Danson, was actually rather faithful, even to Swift’s tasteless jokes. Devoy described something called *Land of the Necromancers* (a story? A game?) in which you could call up any historical figure, such as Jonathan Swift. Garth mentioned *The Devil and Daniel Webster*.

Ray voted for bringing back Jules Verne, to see how many predictions he got right. Garth responded, “how much is science fiction about predictions?” He argued that *prediction* is beside the point; the point of SF is *reasoned speculation*. Barb takes the view that SF is not about prediction, but about conjecture. Garth went on (and on) about the differing degrees of relevance of SF stories to social developments, as when you compare Verne’s stories about the late 19th century and Heinlein’s stories about the late 20th. This led Joe to talk about how American popular attitudes evolved in fact, from early-1940s isolationism to 1990s globalism.

2. *Do fans have lower self-esteem than mundanes?*

Garth asked “which of each?” Barb said “Yeah, on the whole, most of us *are* kind of ‘broken’.” Joe commented that if enough aspersions are cast upon geeks, a class uprising could well take place: a rebellion, a movement, *à la* the black and feminist civil-rights movements. Garth commented that “geek cool” has arisen already, in a few ways. Joe added at this point that mundane reviews of several recent movies show a sort of self-consciousness, about the fact that “norms” are no longer a mainstream.

The transcription notes get a little incoherent at this point, but the common thread *seems* to be social norms, or expectations. Ray told a story about *Dr. Who* being considered a failure by the BBC when it drew only 1.9 million viewers...at a point when it was scheduled directly against *Coronation Street*. Garth mentioned a crank, amateur sociological theory he’s been developing, which leads him to propose that we found an elective, artificial ethnic group. (So far his sporadic articles simply recall the intentional communities of the 1960s-70s.) Ray told a story about a congoer who felt suicidal in the letdown after attending I-Con I. Joe mentioned a *Doonesbury* “Geek Love Rocks” cartoon.

(Do you see the connections?)

3. *If or when some gengineered artifacts act and talk like people...are they still things? Will they be ruled to be citizens, and what does that to the investment a corporation put into them? Or will they become the 22nd century’s “niggers”, or “Gypsies”, or “Jews”?*

Doug thought that in the 22nd century, blacks, Gypsies and Jews would still be persecuted. Joe pointed out that Hungary now has its first pro-Gypsy political party running in current elections. Ray mentioned that he speaks of animals by *gender* pronouns (“he” and “she”), not by “it”.

Trying to get back to the point, Garth argued that if an artifact acts like a person, it is a person—and there’s no percentage in manufacturing persons, if you must legally lose property and intellectual rights in them. He then described Charles Sheffield’s story “Call Me AI”.

Barb described another story of a resurrected personality, in which Mozart is brought back for one last bow. Joe mentioned how clones are not automatically copies of a personality. At this point Garth described Walter Jon Williams' *Reap the Whirlwind*—a story of a future in which people may store, not only a tissue sample, but a brain recording, in order to play a memory and a whole mind into a clone, after death. Joe mentioned the movie *The Boys from Brazil*; the movie also assumes you have to reproduce the nurture, as well as the genetic nature of a person, in order to reproduce them in a clone.

4. *Would a dog's losing its sense of smell be more like a) a human going blind, or b) a human losing their memory?*

Doug commented the dog would still smell awful. Garth blathered about NLP, winding up with the conclusion that the dog would be almost "blind", but it would also lose a lot of memory cues. Ray told a story to demonstrate how dogs depend on smell.

5. *What if there never were a Star Trek: Next Generation – would today's SF media world be quite different?*

Garth thinks not: Was there *anything* ground-breaking in ST:TNG? Barb arrived, and argued there was, but not in the content; the series broke ground for a lot of subsequent SF shows on television. Joe concurred that we would not have *Andromeda*, *Earth: Final Conflict*, *Firefly*; Ray concurred with *X-Files*, *Stargate SG-1*, *Space: The Imagination Station*, arguing that there were no truly successful series until TNG. Doug commented that anime was coming up anyway, about that time. Barb added that until TNG, which went on for seven seasons, there was a "second-season barrier" for most TV series. She suggested that TNG gave SF more credence, in the industry and in public awareness. Garth mumbled something about media SF still appearing in alternative timelines, just differently.

6. *Sometimes when a coin machine rejects one of my quarters, I put the same quarter back in the machine in the same manner, expecting it to be accepted. I can name many similar examples where I repeat the same actions and expect different results. However, since I usually get the different result, does that perhaps mean that it is the universe which is insane?*

Barb commented that you expect machines to work, to give you what you want...or else! Ray told his own story about machines behaving inconsistently—due to an electrical power failure. Fruvous mentioned that people may persist in treating machines the way they "should" work—when coin-operated machines could have been engineered to *stop* accepting coins, when they stop functioning. Barb added that coin-operated machines often refuse to operate with new coins; Fruvous described how dollar-bill machines get temperamental. Garth told why he does the same thing over—lack of alternatives. Barb asked, what would people in the *Star Wars* universe do, when their druids run down? (Garth and Fruvous came up with an extended skit about Star-Wars-universe service personnel.)

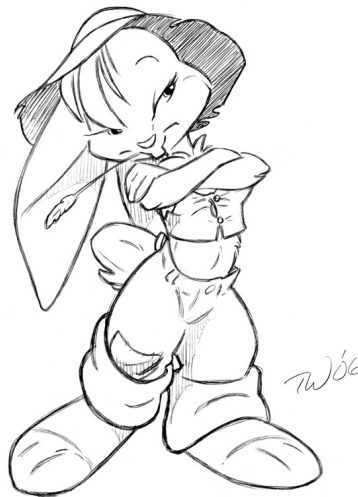
7. *Which character in the Archie comic book series would you like to see sent off to star in a Japanese anime series, as an American exchange student?*

Fruvous voted for Jughead, but confessed he wasn't sure why. All concurred. Various sketches about Jughead in Japan followed. Somehow we ended up talking about Lufthansa stewardesses (well, Garth did), and that unplaceable Euro-trendie on the Mabbin Max (sp.?) ads.

8. *Is there any such thing as a self-sufficient community, or a self-reliant country, anymore?*

All said "No." No country is an island; all are, as Barb put it, "co-dependent".

Our conversation somehow degenerated from there to sex, or what passes for it among "normal" people, and thence to planning a February "swimsuit" edition of *BCSFazine*, featuring cartoons or pictures *just* depicting swimsuits.



Nu?

LETTERS OF COMMENT

Lloyd Penney [penneys@allstream.net], 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2, July 31, 2006

It is the last day of a month of frantic letter writing for me. It is already extraordinarily hot and humid, and I will make comments on *BCSFazine* 399 as I slowly baste.

Again, to Garth, congratulations on your Aurora Award win. Is this your second, with the first an amazing 20 years ago? Well deserved. This year's awards recognize a variety of people from across the country, so I am pleased with the results, and the participation.

((Yes, this is my second Aurora Award, just as you described it.))

Andrew Murdoch...is this fine fellow, once so interested in fanzines, going away? Say it isn't so, Andrew...there's still lots of fun to have and create. If it's true, we've had some fun as far back as the Winnipeg Worldcon in 1994, and say hello to your lovely lady for me.

((Andrew hasn't explicitly told me why Covert Communications was suspended - or else, I plain forgot why - but the fact that he and Suzanne are raising young sort of suggests his disposable time is limited.))

One of my plans for the beginning of August is to do some research in this heat and get a new convention list ready to go. *BCSFAzine* always gives me leads to go on, seeing that you're in a much better position to know about what's going on where you are. The website I research do the rest.

Pirates are popular again, thanks to the success of *Pirates of the Caribbean*, both movies so far. With that in mind, here's some information I relayed to local fans way back in June...

August 19-September 4 - **The Pirate Festival** at Fort York. For all who'd like to see what a pirate village looks like, and lots of opportunities to say ARRRRRR! Adult admission is \$16. For more information, www.thepiratefestival.com.

This event is staged and staffed by the same people who are working to restore a Renaissance Faire to the Toronto area. I guess you just replace "Prithee" with "Arrrr!", and everything works as well.

((I know too much about real pirates to get into the mood. But I do want to give this sort-of fandom some reasonable coverage.))

Quick letter, I guess...for all, my congratulations on reaching 400 issues of your clubzine, and I can't wait to see what it looks like. Off this goes to LJ as well. Take care, and see you then.

Sheryl Birkhead, 25509 Jonnie Court, Gaithersburg, MD 20882, USA, July 31, 2006

Thanks for thish [#399-ed]. I am still playing around with this old-new laptop, but with any luck I'll get the knack of typing on blank templates and get them to print the way I hope. But, instead of wondering about that ... on with the show ...

As a clubzine, it [*BCSFAzine*] should contain club *stuff* - and I look at the handful of other clubzines I get to see what they include ... conreports, tidbits stolen from the Internet but of general interest, Worldcon updates and membership items, information about TAFF and DUFF, and any other general fandom interest topics. One never has any letters, but all the rest run lettercols - of varying lengths. I seriously doubt that any of this is going to be of use to you, but that is what I see in the clubzines I get. A lot of these items you already run - and I looked to see what the difference was - hmm, I think some of it is that most of the others run individualized pieces and not just lists and recountings. The fanzine listings include something like reviews - but not critical comments - just a heads-up as to what lies inside. All in all, I am not exactly sure what there is that makes a spark. I know that in some zines (**not** clubzines), I have found the most enjoyable bits to be by writers such as Sharon Farber and Richard Brandt - so if you can, groom several writers along that line.

Wish I had some ideas for you that were more constructive ...

((I think that's a start. One of the things I notice is that clubs do rather nebulous-but-friendly newsletters, and sometimes I'm hard put to find the news that will interest out-of-towners, or be important to non-members. Another is an idea that persists in popping up, that a club should do a frequent, slim, what's-happening-in-the-next-month newsletter, and a more substantial, opinion-editorial, fannish clubzine, aspiring to be a genzine. For whatever reason, I erased the distinction, and thought the news should be of general interest and importance. Obviously I revived habits that I formed twenty years ago, while editing a national newszine.))

I hope all your readers who were eligible to vote for the Hugos have done so - I will get mine done online very soon. I try to avoid saying "Do as I say and not as I do". As soon as the results are in, the moaning and groaning will begin over this or that category. If *you* have voted,

then at least you were a part of the process, and not just a reactor to something in which you did not participate.

I see the TV ads for *Life on Mars* from the BBC, but since I do not get cable, it looks as if I won't be able to get a look at it. If memory serves me correctly, the latest *Ethel the Aardvark* from Melbourne mentioned this series, so I had already heard a bit about it before the ads started showing up locally. They mentioned a few other series, but I suspect there is even less chance that I'll have access to them ... Ah well.

Everyone who is LA-bound should be putting the finishing touches on the trip arrangements. The rest of us will have to be content to sit in the background and wait to see what unfolds. Each year, as technology progresses, I keep hoping they will figure out a way to get a live feed online – of the Hugos – and maybe the masquerade (although I think they usually run a bit long for that, but maybe not). As a supporting member, I always sit in suspense to see what the concom will send *us* – some send whole big packages, including the daily information sheets, and some just send the program book – you never know. I admit, I really like it when they also have a badge to send, but that is happening less often. Reminds me that I need to check and see what is going on with site selection; I usually vote each year, and then have a supporting membership ready to go, but this year is a bit different and I need to check it out.

(I wish I knew more about the Hugo nominees, in the first place. But then I've never been an informed voter. I had as much as I could do, just to put together a list of things eligible for Aurora Award nomination.

((Some local fans attend Worldcon; I don't. Early on I got notions in my head about Big Cons and their desirability. If I were more honest about it I would admit that crowds and large events bother me, and I had to be persuaded to attend even local events exceeding a thousand attendees, such as Rustycon or Orycon, much less the curious behemoth that is Norwescon.))

BCSFAZINEzine Volume 1, Number 48.399, Thursday 17 August 2006

BCSFAZINEzine is from Felicity Walker, #209-3851 Francis Road, Richmond, British Columbia, V7C 1J6, felicity4711@hotmail.com.

BCSFA Events: Thank you for putting this information back on the inside front cover.

Editorial: Congratulations on your Aurora Award!

((Thank you. I have decided to be amused by one or two ironies about the award – for one thing, I only got one issue of my personalzine out, in the eligibility period, as opposed to 12 issues of BCSFAzine; and for another, I never got around to distributing it in print. Only online.))

Science, Technology, and Inferior Substitutes: “OpenOffice.org Welcomes Microsoft's Tentative Moves Towards OpenDocument” I hope this doesn't mean that Microsoft Word becomes as unusable as OpenOffice Writer.

Writers' World: “Author Writes Worst Book of the Year: Latest Bulwer-Lytton Winner” - I suspect that Guigli plagiarised *Saturday Night Live*. In a sketch in a 1998 episode hosted by Kelsey Grammer, Grammer plays a film noir detective whose thoughts (heard in voice-over narration) continually return to burritos, leading to a noticeable repetition of the word “burrito” which Guigli's passage suspiciously echoes.

Fandom Classic: "LOCs" (Felicity Walker) - Last week, my dad got the scanner working again, so unless something has changed since then, I can go back to scanning. Joe Devoy has a new cartoon, and I'm going to scan that and resume scanning the other submissions you gave me.

Fandom Lite: "Alex Toth Dies at 77" - Toth was indeed a great artist and touched my life, and I'm disappointed to read that his politics were "to the right of [Ronald] Reagan." I would still refer modern animators to his model sheets for *Superfriends* as an example of how to maintain line economy while still drawing realistically.

We Also Heard From: Steve Forty, Frank Skinner, and Taral Wayne



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MEDIA FILE

From Ain't It Cool News:

The 13 new episodes of *Futurama* hit Comedy Central in 2008, but Ben Sinister has already read the first four, and calls it a tearjerker! No mention of the HypnoToad:

[Ben Sinister's New Futurama Preview.](#)

By Ben Sinister

So I read the script for the new *Futurama* episodes / DVD movie. I'll go against Ain't It Cool Tradition, skip five painful and pointless paragraphs that no one cares about, and just cut to the chase.

The script, "Bender's Big Score," is a DVD movie divided into four broadcastable episodes.

I don't know how well each episode stands on its own as a self-contained piece of *Futurama*, but as an arc, the story is delightful and truly epic in scope. ...

Ray Seredin, August 7, 2006



FILM REVIEW

"My Super Ex-Girlfriend"

review by Ryan Hawe

Meet Jenny Johnson. She's an art gallery assistant manager, a tall yet relatively subdued brunette with glasses. To a nice, relaxed, intelligent, field-playing man, such a woman would seem - safe. And said man would be oh so wrong. Jenny, you see, leads a double life - as the cosmically-powered blonde superhero, *G-Girl*. Now, as any fan of the formerly four-colour books (they went to digital colouring some years back) knows, such a life isn't terribly conducive to a relationship. After all, one's always on call to save the city from some sort of threat. And if you have an arch-nemesis, as *G-Girl* does (more on that later), any romantic link that your enemy might find out about will only put him in danger - and run the risk of exposing your identity to a larger number of people.

But these are not the things that cause big trouble for Matt Saunders [Luke Wilson], a man with a history of falling into bad relationships, who ends up dating Jenny [Uma Thurman] after a botched attempt at some non-augmented heroics of his own. Nor is a little problem I'll dub "Woman of Steel, Bed of Toothpicks" more than a painful inconvenience to him. No, it's the fact that deep down, Jenny/*G-Girl* still carries the inferiority complex she carried as a non-powered nerdy girl, loved only by a fellow outcast student. This makes her convinced that even after revealing her statuesque blonde hero look, and engaging in some rather mind-blowing midair sex, she could still be dumped in favour of the nice-but-taken good friend of Matt [played with much understanding by Anna Faris]. When wanty and manipulative behaviour starts turning into arguments, accusations, and knocked-out car windows, Matt takes the advice of his friend Vaughn [Rainn Wilson - no relation], and dumps the crazy.

Then the nightmare really begins, for the saying "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned" takes on new meaning when the woman in question can tow your car into orbit, boil your goldfish with heat-vision, and strip your clothes off in public with hyper-speed. As Great

Power gets used more and more irresponsibly, Matt is drawn into the machinations of "Dr. Bedlam" [Eddie Izzard], a supergenius and supervillain with ties to G-Girl's origins. Our protagonist faces a terrible choice – will he engage in a scheme that will leave New York's frequent saviour depowered, and a known architect of naughty deeds free to work unchecked? But if the alternative is to live in fear of sharks being thrown through your window....

Overall, *My Super Ex-Girlfriend* is an unlikely partnership between the quintessential New-York-based romance comedy (indeed, the opening is textbook for that genre) and the comic-book action that has been making the leap in a big way to movie screens in recent years. With most of the latter having gone for the grim and angsty, the idea of doing a lighter take on the material – while still being consistent with the tropes and tricks of the superhero genre – might strike even some fans as odd. (The last film I can recall to do this was *Mystery Men*, in 1999.) While I personally liked a lot of the more serious comics based films, I found this film to be refreshing. It rolled with the all the established conventions of two genres that many mundanes and not a few fans would consider incompatible, and bridged the gap well, even as it playfully bent and tweaked said conventions.

And, while a few critics in the 'danelaw have been quick to take sides – one even called the film "wilfully misogynistic" – I found that all the main characters were written as believable and not unsympathetic folk. Matt is a well-meaning sort who is clearly out of his league. While the Wilson brothers are renowned for playing things low-key, it works for Luke in a way that it no longer really can for Owen anymore. Dr. Bedlam, while he has admitted to a long career of villainy, seems to have a more complex relation to G-Girl than one might at first expect. Izzard also plays it low-key, but he comes across as all the more believable: a cautious, very smart man, who is able to cause his target grief through research and investigation.

As for Uma Thurman's gleefully over-the-top performance: Not since Jean Grey erased Scott Summers from the plot of *X-Men: The Last Stand* has there been a woman so dangerous to know, in the Biblical sense, as the unhinged G-Girl. That said, her origin and her introduction in the film as the reserved and slightly eccentric Jenny show us the seeds of her downfall, which makes what could easily have been extreme bad comedy all the more believable.

There are a few things overlooked in the story – while we do get to see just how G-Girl is seen by people at large when she is a champion, we do not get to see any public reaction to her later behaviour – which would be bound to attract media attention. But gaps such as these don't break the film – if anything, the fact that I would like to see more of this world shows that writer Don Payne and director Ivan Reitman are on to something here. Indeed, I would love to see the adaptation trend come full circle, and this film to be made into a four-issue comic miniseries.... I'd buy it.

All in all, I say this film is one to watch, one to rent, one to keep. Though perhaps it might not be a date movie, as such....

BOOK REVIEW

(previously published in *BCSFazine* #373, June 2004)

by Greg Slade

Penguins of Shanana, by Barry Took. Bane Books, 2003 (paperback) Rating: 0 out of 3

I have long carped about the low quality of most of the fantasy works on the shelves these days. It's not that I dislike fantasy as a genre so much, as that I can't stand *derivative* fantasy. There are way too many bottom feeders out there who think they can steal plot elements (and

racess, which they generally simply rename without changing any other essentials) from J.R.R. Tolkien, and replicate his sales volume without any of his skill or dedication.

This bit of rubbish is a case in point. Tooks' evil race of "orcas" is a very thinly disguised rip-off of Tolkien's orcs, and his device of always mentioning the fact that their clothes are plain black and white gets "old" pretty quickly. He also never really explains why it is that his "orcas" are so fond of eating the penguins of the title, especially considering that the difference in size between the two races means that the latter are barely big enough to make a mouthful for the former. (Yes, Tooks does go so far as to assert this form of semi-cannibalism, but even though there is violence in this book, none of the penguins actually do get eaten, although there are clues that some other penguins have been eaten by orcas in the past.)

In fact, Tooks is not content to rip off Tolkien. He also rips off his own, earlier, work, *Elftones of Shanana*, which is about the same level of quality, the only significant difference being that the title characters in this book wear tuxedos instead of having long hair and pointy ears. The

essential plot: characters seeking to save their home village by travelling in a quest to win the "Lord of the Sings" talent contest, might as well have been photocopied from the earlier book. In fact, Tooks drags out virtually the same red herrings to try to distract the reader as he did in the earlier book, and they don't smell any better the second time around. (On the other hand, the earlier book was pretty forgettable, so Tooks may have been counting on readers having forgotten it.)

Tooks also makes me crabby in another way. Like so many fantasy hacks, he can't even be consistent within his own, made up, universe. The deep magical significance of the phrase "Shooby-doobop, bop, bop, yeah" which is "revealed" in this book is completely antithetical to its alleged meaning in *Elftones of Shanana*.

It's not my place to tell authors how they should write their books, but salmon of the stuff in this book just gives me a haddoc#\$%#%^&* ...

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BCSFA Events This Month

Saturday Sept. 9 @ 7pm: **September Feeding Frenzy** at Nando's Chicken, 2064 West 41st Avenue, Vancouver: "Portuguese" style spicy chicken by way of everyone's favourite South African fast food chain.

Friday, Sept. 15: **BCSFAzine deadline** – see Garth at FRED if you want to submit to issue #401

Thursday Sept. 21 @ 7pm: **September book discussion** at "Our Town" Café, 245 East Broadway, Vancouver. Book to be discussed will be *The Sheep Look Up*, by John Brunner.

Saturday, Sept. 23: **BCSFA meeting/party** at Kathleen Moore-Freeman's place, 7064 No. 1 Road, Richmond; phone 604-277-0845 for directions.

Friday, Sept. 29: **BCSFAzine production** – distribution starts at FRED

Saturday, Sept. 30 @ 7pm: **Kaffeeklatsch**, our group exercise in hard-headed imagination, at Garth Spencer's place, 82 East 41st Avenue, Vancouver; call 604-325-7314 or email garthspencer@shaw.ca for directions

Art Credits

Sheryl Birkhead.....	Masthead
Taral Wayne.....	cover, pp. 5, 25, 34
Felicity Walker.....	photos: pp. 1, 39, 42
David Malinski (à la Tim Eldred).....	pp. 9, 31, 40
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- ___ Our next request comes to us from Hrothgar Weems, and he writes: "Dear Garth, I'd like to dedicate this zine to my dog, Snuggles." Well, Hrothgar, here's your request ... because YOU Asked For It!
- ___ Life is just full of mysteries, that's all.
- ___ There are some things fans were not meant to know.
- ___ Because one of its legs is both the same.