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WCSFA Elections This Month!
Vote for your favorite candidate in the WCSFA elections on October 26th, at 3266 Grant Street, Vancouver. 3:00 pm!

BCSFAzine.pdf (#5)

With each issue, more and more people are choosing to subscribe to the Adobe Acrobat version of this magazine! Already, I have received word from Steve Forty, our leader of the Collation and Distribution committee, to cut down on the number of physical copies that we give him.

In the old days, we would be concerned as a drop in the demand for hard copies for the BCSFAzine would herald a drop in the membership. With the introduction of the electronic zine, we have been able to cut back on the printing of the zine while still distributing to an increasing membership.

Our photocopier is on its last legs now and the fewer copies we put it through, the better off we will be. In the long run, the club may have to look into replacing the copier.

The current problem however, is that if we do spend a thousand dollars replacing our copier, we will be back to the situation we were in last year. The club will not go into debt, but the safety net will be lost.

What this may mean is that the club will be hampered in its ability to host or sponsor events including any future VCON's.

If you wish to change your subscription from snail mail to e-mail, then send me a note at woolf@vcn.bc.ca and let me know you wish to subscribe electronically. Don't forget to install Acrobat Reader which is a free download at www.adobestudios.com

Remember, in order to get the BCSFAzine, either electronically or through the postal service, you must be a member of WCSFA. Subscription information on page 2.

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WCSFA Memberships

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Make checks payable to WCSFA
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For comments, subscriptions suggestions, and/or submissions, write to:

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Dear John who is still Ken, I guess:

Hello again...it has been a while since I've been able to get writing, what with the pressures of the job hunt and the preparations for the Baltimore Worldcon and the Toronto in 2003 Worldcon bid table and parties there. Now, I have issues 302, 303 and an unnumbered 304 of BCSFAZine, so I'd better catch up.

302...I hope the S'Harien can run a good VCon...this ain't a Trekcon. I'm sure there's already a lot of disappointed members who were hoping for an actor GoH...sorry, but my negative attitude here reflects the attitudes of the local Trekfen. I hope Vancouver's are more enlightened. I've been reading about how fursuiting is popular at cons, especially furrycons. I hope many of those furrycons are not during the summertime, for obvious reasons. Even the most ventilated costume can be a portable sauna suit in summer.

303...I appreciate Harry Warner's remarks about CUFF. The idea behind CUFF is admirable, but apathy has taken a chunk out of the whole fan fund. I hope we're not presiding over its death. Me as a youthful James Garner...Harry, if you ever saw a picture of me, you'd be in for a major disappointment. I have since moved on to a new job closer to home, a little better pay and a lot less stress. I enjoyed the original Twilight Zone and Outer Limits, but also their newer versions.

To Dr. Media...I heard something recently about a law suit arising from the BBC's not going through with a proposed Dr. Who movie that went into pre-production, and then was shut down. The producer of this movie was Leonard Nimoy. Any info on this one?

304...As I read page 2, my earlier apprehensions about a Trek club running V-Con are eased. There's more to life than spending most of your time in front of the tube.

All right, Graeme...let's see what kind of response there is to a fanzine column. Making such contributions to fanzines can be a lot of fun, and I would not have written hundreds of letters of comment, such as this one, over the years without feeling I'm contributing to the zine itself. I would like to think that's why most fanzines have a letter column...feedback and input from non-members and members alike.

Time to fold up, end of zines. Take care, and send the .pdf PDQ.


Yours, Lloyd Penney.

Greetings From Ypsilanti, Michigan, USA,
The new issue of Science Fiction Chronicle (August 1998) stated that BCSFAZine is available from the editor. If this is a true statement, I would appreciate a copy. I have Adobe Acrobat and anxiously await your response.

Many thanks,

Michael W. Waite

Hi there!

In Science Fiction Chronicle 198 I read one can have an issue of your zine as a file? I am a German fan and fanzine publisher and I am interested how you do these things. Please mail me the file.

Thanks and best wishes to you.

Wilko Mueller, Jr.

Dear John:

Please do not feel excessive alarm over the unconventional stationary. I have not reverted to high school activities nor have I lost so much of my vision that I can't distinguish between various types of typing paper. I simply ran out of my regular LOC paper without realizing it and I'm too old to go racing out this evening to buy more amid the prowling gangs of teenagers at the shopping centers.

So, you may even suspect that this medium of conveying to you a LOC on the August issue of BCSFAZine is actually a covert means of expressing my dismay over the dark background for the LOC section. I don't mean it that way. Fortunately, I didn't need to read my own letter and my vision was not too severely impaired by struggling with the others. I know that professional magazines are very fond nowadays of putting a dark grey or coloured background behind the typography but nobody has ever explained to me why they do it at a time when they should be making their publications easier to read in order to compete a little better with the ever-improving television temptation.

I still suspect that you could get copying for BCSFAZine at a less expensive rate if your members searched the city of Vancouver for a shop that offers a particularly good price structure for quantities in the range that you need. Those that advertise are frequently the most expensive. The place I patronize for apazines offers copying for 2.25¢ in quantities of 100 or more. It's a large store that almost hides its copying service in one corner and makes its existence known only via a sign on a window, not in media advertising. If you count up the cost of paper and toner refills, I don't think you can publish for a much lower rate with your own copier.

It was surprising to learn from Dr. Media that Dr. Who suffered from competition with Little House on the Prairie in England. I had assumed that American programs from the commercial

Some folks consider it not worth the effort organizing a club event unless they are guaranteed an attendance of between fifteen and twenty people. My criteria? More than two. As I've always said, if you post the event with enough notice, enough people will attend to make the event worthwhile. But if you posted the event and the only ones who show up are yourself and one other person, then you didn't do your homework in finding out what the club membership really wants, did you?

Enough people showed up at September's Roastie (where we discussed the novel "Steeldriver" with the author himself. You do know who wrote "Steeldriver", right?) that a good time was had by all. In fact, it was agreed by all that this is an event worth having again. I personally think that holding this event monthly is insane, since it's bound to cut into the time one sets aside to read other things. Once every two months is more like it. This will give the reader more time to track the book down as well as read it. Of course this is subject to change depending on what those who attend future Roasties have to say.

We also decided not to restrict the novel selection to local authors. In other words, even if the author resides elsewhere in Canada, the United States, overseas, or the land of the dead, should he or she make it to the Roastie in question, we will pay for his or her meal.

So how do we pick the novel? At the end of the meeting, each

person will be given a small scrap of paper to write their novel suggestion on. Once done, each person will crumple his or her choice into a little ball and drop it into The Toxic Gray Container of Novel Suggestions (a 7-11 Double Big Gulp plastic cup spray painted gray) that will be provided by myself. After the container is shaken long enough, one of us will reach in and pick one crumpled up piece of paper at random. Unless it can be proven that the novel or author written on that scrap of paper never existed, this is the book that will be discussed next meeting. Even if the book you suggested was not chosen, chances are it will be eventually. Because all scraps of paper that go into The Toxic Gray Container of Novel Suggestions will stay there until drawn, regardless of how many Roasties go by. So come prepared with the name of at least one book in mind.

Naturally, if I'm unable to attend due to work commitments, feel free to decide amongst yourselves what the next novel will be. Just remember to either inform me or the BCSFAzine editor. The next Writer's Roastie is scheduled to go as follows:

The Book: "3001" by Arthur C. Clarke

The Place: "Tops Restaurant" 2790 Kingsway, Vancouver

The Date: Tuesday, November 17th, at 7 pm.

Note to latecomers. It's pretty easy to spot our table upon entering the restaurant. So if you are late, just walk right in.

Doug Finnerty

...Continued Page 2

networks ended up in England on the profit seeking television channels, too. **Little House** is still available in the United States, running five mornings a week on Ted Turner's TBS cable channel. **Dr. Who** continues to appear on the Maryland public television network late a night on Saturdays, except when it's pre-empted, although recently it has been cut back to half-hour episodes instead of the previous policy of sticking together all the episodes from each adventure.

Unfortunately, the new British cable channel for United States viewing seems not to have achieved full coverage in this nation. I haven't seen it included in the offerings of the basic packages offered by any of the small-dish satellite services so far. The local cable company hasn't said a word about adding it to its line-up, which isn't surprising, because the last four or five new offerings for local subscribers had been pay extra premium movie channels.

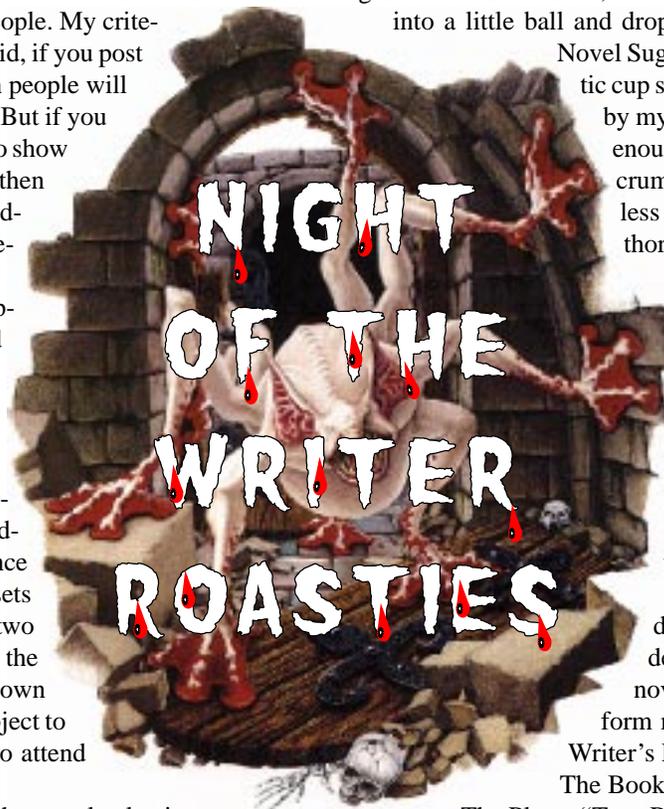
Alas, I don't think I want to read either of the books reviewed in the issue by Donna McMahon. At my age, I'm certainly not going to get involved in a novel like *Metropolitan* that has too many characters and too many plot twists, because I'd never remember half of these elements by the time I was in the final portion of the book. And I'm tired of vampire stories, no matter how original or well-written they may be. Donna is to be commended for describing the books expertly enough to save me quite a few hours of reading time.

And if you're still bothered by the lines on this paper, just think how much worse it will be when you're old like me and have them all over your face permanently, with no hope of getting rid of them by a purchase at a local store.

Yrs., &c.,



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Making connections: Conifur comments

First off this month, I'd like to apologize for not having been present in BCSFAzine for the past couple of issues. Alas, that mundane thing called 'life' has been chasing my tail, and I've been lacking in inspiration for anything remotely furry (which can really irritate a writer, believe me.) But, if you're looking for furry inspiration, there's nothing like a good convention to get the creative juices flowing. And the convention I was at over the Labor Day weekend was just that - a good convention. Conifur Northwest was held at the Clarion Hotel at Sea-Tac, just south of Seattle, a three-day event that was the very first for the Pacific Northwest, which is rather surprising considering the large number of furs in Seattle and Portland, especially.

Formed when a group of furs decided that a convention in the PacWest would be worth doing and would give people something to fill space between the spring cons, Conifur Northwest seems to have fit the bill of what they were looking for - a fun, enjoyable and family-oriented convention that brought out the best in furry.

I'll note right now that I didn't get out for the whole con - I had to work and then dashed south at speed Saturday morning, arriving around 2 that afternoon; tie that in with the weekend also being a bonding session with a significant other, and I did end up getting to less than I might have really wanted to otherwise. However, what I saw definitely proved that it was worth the trip.

My impressions:

This was probably the most well-run convention I've ever been to. The organizers (especially noticeable were Flinthoof, Tibo and Richard Chandler) had great attitudes and definitive rules that were followed to the letter all through the weekend; they knew how they wanted things to go and that was how things went. Con staff were noticeable by their distinctive shirts, security also had definite markings, and communications were made effective by radios with shoulder microphones (note to Vancouver con staff: THIS IS A GOOD IDEA! They're cheap to rent, too! Might be an idea...) One complaint about a lot of furrycons is the adult content - while some people prefer to have that sort of thing out in the open, this con was declared a PG-13 rating when first proposed - and that's how it stayed. In the dealers' room, anyone with X-rated prints had them clearly marked, and anyone with orange marker on their con badge (signifying underage) had no access to it - or to the R-rated section of the art show. I didn't see anything in the hallways more than a bit of congenial skritch and hugs, and I think my choke chain was the only collar in evidence as well. As for the dealer's den, great selection of items and people available - noticeably the side-by-side tables of two of my favorite artists, Michele Light and Terrie Smith. Got me a



Michele Light badge (a snow fox, mmmm), and across the way caught up on my Albedo collection, directly from the artist who got me into furry in the first place, Steve Gallacci. (I restrained myself from falling to my knees and worshipping.) Saturday evening featured a pizza feeding frenzy and a screening of the Rankin-Bass classic (?) The Last Unicorn on the big-screen. Pizza good, movie... eh. A spontaneous MSTing broke out towards the end, which livened things up considerably.

Artists' Alley: Again, great stuff. Alas, Tygger was hiding - I didn't recognize her until she sat on the very last panel I was at. If I had, I'd have showed up wearing my Guardian Knights T-shirt... The art show featured a little of everything, from Tygger prints to Mitch Biero's native-inspired pieces to a unique piece titled 'Still Life with Airport', which added spice to the art auction.

Glen Wooten (Terrie Smith's SO) did the honors as auctioneer, and bidding was very good for everything that made auction. Terrie's works were well-represented, with one piece bringing a hotly contested max bid of \$250 (and well worth it). (Elf Sternberg was one of those bidding there, standing next to me... I resisted the urge to grovel at his feet and declare that he was the reason I got into furry writing...) Margaret Carspecken (<http://www.ozfoxes.net/>) was another hotly contested artist - her image 'Robin Hood', with Robin and Marian as foxes in her own wonderful style also cashed in at \$250, and every piece she entered went to auction and sold well.

The aforementioned Still Life with Airport (a blank frame set facing out the window over Sea-Tac) was also hotly contested, with bids from Bill Gates, the FBI, and a declaration of ownership by the NSA. Fortunately, Michael Jackson overruled them and it went to auction. The winning bid: travelling rights and a dimensional gateway to FurryMUCK. Imagine that. The last panel Wuffie and I got to before disappearing into Seattle for the day was a discussion of the way furry is perceived and whether it needs to be 'cleaned up', as it were. I'll get into this in future columns, as it's a topic that definitely bears discussion.

Overall, Conifur Northwest was one of the best cons I've been to. I might have missed a large amount of it, but what I saw was excellent. Great panels, great events, great organization... I'll be back next year. And the year after that, and so on...

Until next month, keep your tail out from under the rocking chair...



Tony

FORGET REALITY ENJOY FEEDING FRENZIES

No one's brought this to my attention yet, but I suspect that my FREFF announcements have been taking up more space than necessary. Methinks more articles on SF/F related issues are what's needed for BCSFAzine, not a lavish promotion for an upcoming WCSFA event.

So henceforth, I shall keep my FREFF articles to a bare minimum. The FREFF for October and November are as follows.

- 7pm Monday October 26 - **Trocedero Pizza & Steak House** 2411 Nanaimo, Vancouver. Pizza and Pasta and Ribs! Oh my!
- 7pm Monday November 30 - **Beethoven's J Pizza Gourmet #4** - 2909 Bainbridge, Burnaby. I've always wanted to try this place, but the nearby Fogg N' Suds was just too close!

There will be no FREFF in December for the simple reason that Christmas and New Years celebrations will take up too much time and money for most people. FREFF will resume in the new year where future excursions shall include trips to Chinatown's jagged little edge, a hideaway along Kingsway and a certain Rainforest.



Doug Finnerty

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Looking back at the many films I have seen, from elementary school to the modern blockbusters I now trash my brains on, I can't help but remember the many which predicted the future. Even the literature I read in grade school sometimes had such speculative concepts which got me looking forward to the future. I too thought about becoming a Science Fiction writer when I was just eight years old. However, my mind was never on the horizons. I was always concerned with where I was and what I was doing. I was conservative! Thus, a living as an imaginative writer of future was never going to happen.

Yet, the films still stayed with me in the back of my mind. "In the future..." the narrator would enthusiastically drone, listing the many benefits of the upcoming technology. Gone were the problems which we used to face and wasn't that just wonderful!

There were predictions of what the roads of the future would look like. Huge curves which will accomodate the high speed cars of the future travelling at a stunning 55 miles per hour, the maximum speed of the cars because the human brain is unable to deal with speeds faster than that.

There would be no roads as everybody in 1979 would be commuting with their own airplanes which looked very much like biplanes which could hover and land vertically. Traffic jams were to be a thing of the past.

Going to work would be much less stressful because the cars would have an autopilot which would drive themselves allowing the driver to catch up on some work, do a little reading, or even sneak in an extra few minutes sleep.

We would commute from planet to planet in rocket ships propelled by atomic explosions, though the G-forces involved would require that anyone hoping to work off planet would have to undergo extensive conditioning.

By the year 1984, there would be a system of government which would look after all our needs. They would watch over us and re-educate us to conform with the rest of society. We would be able to listen to our Big Brother and learn and forget as he needed us to.

Students would no longer have to go to school since the classroom would be available to them right at home. They would be able to interact with their teachers on a one-on-one basis because the teacher would be a computer able to monitor the progress of the student. You would be able to learn at your own pace stepping away from the computer terminal whenever you like, with the exception of when you do too much of it and the

teacher lets you know how disappointed it is in you as you turn it off.

When we compare the predictions to the reality of our world, we can not help but scoff at many of the predictions. For example, we know for a fact that the average person can handle speeds in excess of 55 mph and that we do not commute by airplane or even go off planet to work on a regular basis. Traffic jams are very much a part of today's life, as we commute to work in our driver controlled cars. People were concerned when NASA launched a satellite with an atomic generator on board. That would certainly eliminate the possibility of using an atomic explosion to launch anything. We certainly do not have a brainwashed society like that which was predicted in Orwell's book *1984*.

Yet, if we look carefully, we can see many of the predictions being very much within our grasp. With the invention of the Space Shuttle, the low-G launches would certainly make civilian space travel much more likely. With the number of road accidents, I wonder if it is true that 55 may be too fast for us. The Ford company is currently testing out autopilot cars for our highways. There are people who commute all around the world doing business on various airplanes and helicopters. Do you know how many cameras are currently watching you? School can already be found on the internet. Palm pilots and cell phones give us a virtual Star Trek here and now.

There is a common thread throughout the history of such speculative non-fiction. Whenever there is a development in an area speculation runs rampant. In times of economic boom, there is speculation on the material things of life. Cars, airplanes, computers and other major appliances automated to the point that the Jetsons look primitive. Society will be a virtual Utopia as we have always dreamed.

During times of economic downturn, we see speculative material on the social structure that is to come. Usually the images are bleak and the societies are oppressive (*Metropolis*). These themes are reflected in modern films such as *Blade Runner* and *THX 1136*.

Today we look towards the stars to find ourselves. We know that in it we will see horror, helplessness, and hope. In the void of space we search for life. The search will bring us peace and war. We are forever looking towards the horizons, the future. Never on where we are, what we are doing. We are reckless. We make lousy Jedi.



JCHW

The Sword's Edge

This one will be short and sweet! The planning for VCon 24 is in full swing and we are showing ourselves to be one heck of an organized bunch. There are more ideas flowing than ever and the group is enthused. Our ConCom so far consists of: Chair - Don McGovern; Vice Chair, Programming - Lisa McGovern; Janice Gardner; Marketing/Advertising and Dealers Room - Tammy Midttun, Corie Euteneier; Registration - Mary May de Jong, Suzanne Campbell, Wiebe de Jong; Treasurer - Frank Skinner; Hospitality - Norm Midttun, Kathie Ponsford, Barbara Scutt, David Connors; Website - Wiebe de Jong; KidCon - Andrew Brechin, Julie Andrien; Hotel Liaison - Lisa Gemino; Operations - David Langtry, Rob Holstein; Art Show - Doug Finnerty; Camarilla Liaison - Jeff ?; Gaming Room hosted by Imperial Hobbies and Wax Pax'n'Stuff. As the ConCom positions are getting filled, we are presently looking for volunteers to help us do the legwork. Anyone interested in a specific area, please call 931-1241 or email Don and I at dmcgover@direct.ca

Other than that, the only other thing left is a reminder about Halloween. The party is at #74 - 12551 Cambie Rd., Richmond. Start time is 6:30 pm. Come in costume. The cost is \$10 to help pay for the food and the fireworks. For information call the above number or email us.



By Lisa McGovern



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6 Fan's Guide to Events and Conventions

F.R.E.D. - Every Friday

The weekly gathering of BCSFAns and all others interested in joining us for an evening of conversation and relaxation, with pool table option. At the Burrard Motor Inn opposite St. Paul's Hospital (Downtown Vancouver) 6 blocks south of Burrard Skytrain Station. 3 blocks west of Granville (where many buses run). #22 Knight/McDonald bus along Burrard. Begins 8:00pm.

On the Friday before long weekends, FRED will be at the lounge of Bosman's Hotel. This is two blocks east and a part of a block north of the Burrard Motor Inn (actual address is 1060 Howe St.).

Ether Patrol Radio Show - Every Wednesday Listen to the only SF talk show on Vancouver Co-Op Radio, hosted by Simba. Wednesday nights at 9:30 PM on CFRO 102.7FM.

Contributor's Deadline -, Oct. 16th, Nov. 13th, Dec. 18th, Jan 15th Send your submissions/loc to John Wong at 2041 East 10th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V5N 1X9 or E-Mail me at woolf@vcn.bc.ca.

BCSFaine Collation - Nov. 8th, Dec. 6th, Jan. 3rd. First Sunday of the month 4:30PM. Call Steve Forty (S.40) to confirm at 936-4754.

BCSFAzine Pickup at FRED - Nov. 6th, Dec. 11th Pick up your issue of BCSFAzine at FRED! Pristine, mint condition copies are available at FRED. Call Steve to let him know you wish to pick up your copy. (These dates are approximate only. Due to production scheduling changes, the issues may be available one week early.)

InCon October 16-18

at the Double Tree Inn (formerly the Spokane Valley Red Lion) located in Spokane, WA. Take exit 291 (Sullivan Road) off Interstate 90 For reservations, call 509-924-9000 and tell them you are with InCon '97. Choice of quiet or lively floors. Connie Willis (Author GoH), Alan Clark (Artist GoH), Kevin Siembieda (Gaming guest!) Gaming, Dealer's Room, Anime' Room, Fan Clubs, Banquet, Masquerade, Art Show, Writer's Workshop, Video Room, Parties, Doll Costuming, Charity Auction, Costume Contests, Panel Discussions, Autograph Sessions, Dances, Miniature Contest, Author Readings
Prices are: \$15 until May 1st, \$20 until September 1st, \$25 at the door

Terracon October 30-Nov. 1, 1998 Best Western Executive Inn, Fife, WA
Author GoH: Elizabeth Ann Scarborough, Media GoH: Anthony Stewart Head (from

Buffy the Vampire Slayer), Fan GoH: Becky Simpson

Guests are subject to cancellation due to professional commitments. We've announced a postponement of Terracon. We are planning to hold this convention on November 27-29, 1998, at the Tyee Hotel in Tumwater, Washington.

Orycon November 13-15, 1998

Where: The Doubletree Hotel Portland Columbia River (formerly Red Lion) in Portland, Oregon.

Writer GoH: Lois McMaster Bujold, Artist GoH: Alan Clark, Editor GoH: Ellen Asher (Editor of the SF Book Club), Returning Guests of Honor: David Langford and Howard Waldrop, Special Guest: Robert Lionel Fanthorpe, Special Susan C. Petrey Guest: Kathe Koja, Friends of Filk Guest: Michael Longcor

Memberships OryCon 20 are \$30 until July 15, 1998, \$35 until October 15, 1998, more at the door. Make checks payable to "OryCon 20". Anyone who has attended all of the previous OryCons will receive a free membership to OryCon 20. (You've earned it!) Memberships are available by mail and at Wrigley-Cross Books (1809 NE 39th Avenue, near Sandy) or Future Dreams (18th and East Burnside) in Portland. Because of space limitations at the hotel, memberships will be limited to a total of 1600. Once we've sold that many, we'll start turning people away at the door. So get your memberships early! Because we expect to sell out during the convention, no one-day memberships will be sold. Internet: jlorentz@spiritone.com

Postal: OryCon 20, PO Box 5703, Portland, Oregon 97228

Telephone: (503) 283-0802

Rustycon 1999 Jan 15-17

Writer Guest of Honour John Cramer, Art OH Monika Livingstone Fan GOH Michael Citrak, Special GOH Dragon
Memberships: \$30.00 through June 30, 1998, \$35.00 through December 31, 1998 \$40.00 for the full weekend. \$20.00 Friday only. \$25.00 Saturday only. \$25.00 Saturday night & Sunday
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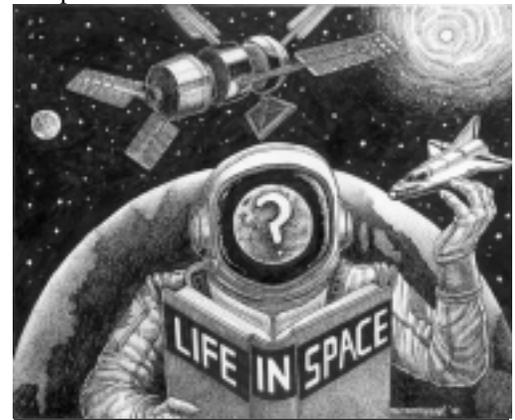
The Hotel: Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center, 101 128th S.E., Everett, Washington 98208, (425) 337-2900, (800) 256-8137, (425) 337-0707 (Fax) ROOM RATES \$65 + Tax per traditional room (1-4 people), \$89 + Tax per Suite (1-4 people)

POTLATCH 8 will be held January 22, 23 and 24, 1999, at the Doubletree Inn on the

border between Springfield and Eugene, Oregon. Current memberships are \$30 through December 31, 1998, and \$35 thereafter and at the door. A limited number of dealers' tables are also available for \$15 per table, as described in the Dealers' Room page. (If you'd like to cut to the chase, you can send your membership to: Potlatch 1999 355 Howard Street Eugene, OR 97404-2829

Radcon 2C website. We're very excited about our 1999 convention, and we're anxious to tell you a bit more about it. Radcon 2C will be held on February 12-14 of 1999, at the Double Tree Inn (547-0701, or 1 800 222-TREE). This year's convention promises to be our best ever. We're pulling out all the stops and working round the clock to make this one truly a convention to remember.

Full Weekend (3 Days) \$20 per person, Friday only \$10 per person, Saturday only \$15 per person, Sunday only \$5 per person



V-Con 24 May 21-23, 1999 "Life in Space?" GoH - A.C. Crispin and Michael Capobianco, Artist GoH - Betty Bigelow Toastmaster - David Bigelow

Membership Rates: \$25 CDN, \$18 US until October 31, 1998 (Under 12 — \$15) \$30 CDN, \$21 US until January 1, 1999 (12 & under — \$20); \$35 CDN, \$24 US until March 31, 1999 (12 & under — \$20); \$40 CDN, \$27 US until April 15, (12 & under — \$20). No mail in memberships after April 15th. Memberships at the Door: (3 day) \$45CDN, \$30 US (12 & under \$20) 6 & under are free. VCon 24 is offering a KidCon with crafts, demos, masquerade and more! Website: <http://www.geocities.com/area51/corridor/7214/vcon24>

To Volunteer contact Don or Lisa McGovern at 931-1241 or email dmcgover@direct.ca
Send memberships to: 1410 Regan Avenue, Coquitlam, BC, Canada. V3J 3B5

Location: Days Hotel Surrey City Centre (formerly the Surrey Inn) 9850 King George Hwy., Surrey, BC Room Rates: TBA For reservations call: 1-800-663-0660

This was intended as a rebuttal to John Wong's article on whether or not there is a potential for a subset of furrydom called "mechanoids" (my term as unfortunately I've lost the original article which either ran in the June or July issue of BCSFAZine). Although I've recently seen "The Brave Little Toaster Goes To Mars" (which apparently inspired John's article) I suspect this article comes way too late to be of any relevance.

Whether or not mechanoids become the next big thing, or minor subgenre, of fandom costuming, I suspect that remote controlled droids will make an appearance at conventions within the next few years. This is because the boys who bring home the big bucks will be in the market for bigger toys. While remote controlled Artoo units will seem amusing at first, the following incident will most likely cause droids to be banned from all conventions.

Mid Sunday morning (at a convention near you) on the hotel's fifth floor, a remote controlled Dalek trundles out of the elevator. After knocking over the cleaning staff's cart, the Dalek proceeds to run over the feet of every costumed "Doctor" in the hallway - Sticking its death ray projectors into inappropriate places along the way. Chanting "Exterminate!" as it goes, the Dalek then proceeds to trash the Hospitality Suite. This is why remote controlled droids will remain a short lived fad at most conventions.

As for whether Conan or Red Sonja would dance with animatronic forks and spoons, I really believe these two barbarians would dance with anybody! It fits their personality profile quite nicely. As does the concept of Neil Gaiman's Lady Death dancing with Gort (death-dealing alien robot or WWII British General - take your pick)! You see, I really don't think your potential dance partner will care if your costume clashes with his or her's. Chances are that he or she has other criteria in mind, such as:

- Age Restriction
- Gender Preferences
- Whether the person behind that cos-

tume has a high sense of honour or whether he/she considers AUTOCAD to be a lifestyle choice and not a computer program.

- Other criteria that some people may consider highly restrictive and utterly unfair.

Not having been on the dance floor lately (for the very good reason that I can't dance at all), I've always assumed that convention dances were mini replicas of some Intergalactic Ball in a far flung future (where various races and factions do mingle). Not some twisted parody of your average high school dance (where everyone sticks to their own group and faction interaction does not occur). If the later turns out to be the case, I think I'll be spending another VCON Saturday Night in the Gamin Room playing Illuminati. Should the loud dance music from the dance floor prove to be as disruptive to game playing as the last convention, I'll be nominating Chris Sheppard (pirate radio deejay extraordinaire) for his very own Illuminati card. Cccrrraazzzyy Man!

As for whether mechanoids must first seek furry approval before proceeding with their costuming endeavors, I really think that furies could care less. Unfortunately, the biggest restriction in costuming is not whether the personae desired carries along an animal totem as extra baggage, but on how well the costume conforms to the human body. If the costume can put forth the illusion that there is no human body supporting it, then the costume's designer (if not wearer) has done quite well.

Speaking of furrydom, and the question is when is a furry not a furry, I would like to bring forth the sad case of one Brigadier General Guy Loup. He is the chief villian in a Bernard Cornwall novel called "Sharpe's Battle". (My total

summer reading comprises of four "Richard Sharpe" novels, one "Flashman", the first 300 pages of "War and Peach" and the preface to Angus Ried's "Shakedown". Not counting what I get from the two writers workshops I go to, I haven't read a single SF/F piece this summer.)

This Napoleonic era psycho commands a wolf fur-clad group of soldiers whose chief task is to hunt down Spanish partisans. Although Guy Loup sees himself and his men as embracing the ways of the wolf, Richard Sharpe wonders if these aren't the kind of fur-clad barbarians who brought down Western Civilization (as in Roman Empire) in the first place. Whatever the case, Loup's men don't wear their totems very well.

However, the concept of a gallant and honourable Napoleonic wolf named Guy Loup is something a furry artist or costumer could have a field day with. One who romps around the Spanish Peninsula in search of his playful opponent, El Coyote. Some should grab this concept before the folks behind "Flintloque" do, or we'll have a horde of Elf Wolfriders (ala "Elfquest") to deal with.

Sadly enough, the spanish partisan in "Sharpe's Battle" is not El Coyote bu El Castrador. Just another indication of how grim these "Richard Sharpe" novels really are.



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Murder in the Solid State, Wil McCarthy (Tor 1996) ## *Happy Policeman*, Patricia Anthony (Ace 1996) *Commitment*, James Alan Gardner (Avon 1998) *Dark Water's Edge*, Stephen Leigh (Avon 1998)

(NOTE: The books reviewed in this month's column are available through the Vancouver Public Library system. ## = hardcover.)

Murder in the Solid State is what many fans are always complaining there aren't enough of—a HARD science fiction story, and it's a murder mystery as well. David Sanger, a brilliant but politically naive young nanotech specialist, finds himself suspect number one in the murder of an eminent older scientist who Sanger had publicly feuded with. As Sanger tries to clear himself by uncovering the real culprit, he begins to suspect that someone is deliberately trying to suppress "dangerous" nanotechnology. And they won't hesitate to kill him to do so.

McCarthy's near future is much the same as has been postulated by other writers, if somewhat better drawn than average. The U.S. government is being controlled by the "Gray Party," a small but virulently conservative group which wields influence far out of proportion to its actual number of followers. The government, with much rhetoric about Law and Order, has actually succeeded in lowering the crime stats by overriding most civil rights. Surveillance cameras are everywhere and that favourite American nightmare has occurred—guns have been banned! (Parts of this book read like a Libertarian treatise or an NRA ad.)

However, *Solid State* is a decent read, with good pacing, competent characterization, and only a small number of technical lectures. (Mind you, I could have lived without the pie chart explaining each character's thematic role). My only serious complaint is that the conclusion smacked of deus ex machina—after lots of rising suspense and complications, Sanger gets himself out of trouble with ludicrous ease.

Happy Policeman could also be considered an SF murder mystery, but this is a far different type of book. It reminded me most of an old Twilight Zone episode.

The town of Coomey, Texas has been completely isolated by an alien energy barrier and the townspeople have been living for six years with the knowledge that the rest of Earth has probably been destroyed in a nuclear war. Despite the presence of aliens ("Torku") who keep humans supplied with necessities via an interface they can understand (to get something you call 911 and the Torku deliver it in a UPS van), the locals are trying to live a "normal" life. Their fragile stability is threatened when Sheriff DeWitt discovers that a woman has been murdered.

The characterization in this book is excellent and the pacing is good, moreover there is a quite fascinating trial near the end, so I read the whole thing and enjoyed it, but it felt like some kind of zen existential exercise and Rod Serling didn't tell me what the moral was. If any of you read this book and figure out what it was about, would you tell me?

By far the best science fiction novel I've read in a long time is *Commitment* by James Alan Gardner. This book deals with a popular SF topic—a society in which gender is organized very differently than in ours—but it provides a new twist.

It's the 25th century and most of Earth's people have gone to the stars, leaving behind a small remnant population who live in relatively backwardness among the ruins of "Old-Tech." Fullin lives in one of the oddest corners of this world, Tober Cove, a remote East Coast fishing town. In Tober Cove every child switches genders each year until the age of 20. And Fullin is 20 years old. Tomorrow he must choose which gender he will remain for the rest of his life.

The entirety of this novel takes place over less than 24 hours. We meet Fullin and his childhood sweetheart, Cappie, on the eve of their gender Commitment. And as if making the big decision isn't problem enough, a Spark Lord arrives in Tober Cove for the first time in history. He starts unearthing all the town's secrets and, even worse, he brings a "neut" with him—a person who made the taboo choice of becoming a hermaphrodite and has been banished.

And the plot twists keep on coming. Right up to the end of this book I wasn't sure what would happen (or which sex Fullin would choose), and the climax was both unexpected and far more complex than I had guessed. Gardner also leaves

lots of things tantalizingly uncertain for a long time. For instance, exactly how do the inhabitants of Tober Cove change their sex? Or does it happen at all? Are they all perhaps collectively psychotic?

I have only the smallest quibbles with the book. For instance, I am quite sure that Gardner has never lived in a fishing village. He did a thorough job of describing the religious culture, but didn't capture the feel of a fish-guts-stinking rural subsistence economy. Also, he postulates that in a society with very rigid traditional gender roles, the sex ratio would end up around 50-50 even if each person was given a completely free choice of sex. I didn't buy that.

But these really are quibbles. The book is engaging, entertaining, funny and very well written. Don't miss it.

And if you enjoy *Commitment*, you will probably also enjoy *Dark Water's Embrace* by Stephen Leigh. Coincidentally, this book also touches extensively on gender roles, although from a considerably different angle.

The colony starship Ibn Battuta arrived at the planet Mictlan and settlers were just beginning to build two colonies when a catastrophic accident killed everybody on the ship. A tiny group of survivors struggled to survive on the surface, battling hostile conditions, low fertility, and a terribly high rate of mutation and deformity.

One century later the colonists have survived, but their numbers are not growing and Anais Koda-Levin, a doctor, is struggling to find answers. She is also struggling with her own infertility and the other colonists' hostility towards her suspected sexual "deformities." She distracts herself in her spare time by examining the preserved body of one of Mictlan's extinct sentient natives, which they dug out of a peat bog near the colony. The more Anais studies the body and the archaeological record, the more she becomes fascinated by the mystery of the sudden extinction of the ancient Miccail. What caused it? And could the answer provide a key to human survival, or will humans become the second extinct race on Mictlan?

I probably would have rated this book higher if I hadn't read it right after *Commitment* because it's good—it's just not as well written as Gardner's book, and the plot is considerably more predictable. Well, there are two plots, actually—a second storyline goes back in time and follows the story of a Miccail named Kai. However, since the reader already knows that he was hit on the head, strangled and then thrown in a peat bog, there's a certain lack of suspense in that part of the plot.

Still, I'd say this book is another keeper and I recommend it.

Comments? Rebuttals? Suggestions? donna_mcmahon@sunshine.net.



10% WCSFA member's discount does not apply on sale items.

Lets face it, science is out of control. I think it started with the caveman who saw a tree roll down a hill, and came up with the concept of the wheel. Since then there have been two kinds of people when it comes to technology; those who ride in cars, and those who stand in the middle of the street waiting to be run over. As the technology changes, the people don't. There are people who can record a TV show when they are not at home and those who's VCR clock flash 12:00.

There has been a limiting factor on this problem. People who can't deal with technology, usually don't have to. You do not need to know how to set a timer to play a movie and if you can't drive, take a bus....

But then we added computers to the mix.

Now, all over the country, people who still find the concept of a microwave oven difficult, are being forced to tangle with the what is probably the most complicated, yet stupid tools ever made. Lets face it, computers are not bright. They cannot do anything that you do not ask them to do (if not you, then the person who programmed your wordprocessor

asked.) And as dumb as the computer is, I keep meeting users who are worse.

You see, I answer the tech calls for the company I work for. More than once, I have received a call saying that there was an error. When I would ask what the error message was, they would reply that they didn't know, they had already pressed the ignore button and now the system had locked. I have actually hit people with a rolled up newspaper before they would stop doing this to me.

I thought I was alone in this, until my roommate told me of a frustrating call she received at work. A customer called to complain, insisting that they had been sold the wrong keyboard. The program had asked them to press the "Enter" key and their keyboard didn't have one. My roommate tried to explain that "Enter" "Return" "New Line" and the key with an arrow pointing to the left were the same thing, all to no avail.

Oh good, I'm not the only one. Then, she introduced me to a web page she found. <http://www.rinkworks.com/stupid/> This place is good for a laugh, as it is full of stories that

prove that some people should not touch a computer.

Such as:

Customer: "Me think the printer doesn't work. It always refuses to print the last page of my listing."

After some hard thinking...

Operator: "Did you try the formfeed button before tearing off your listing?"

Customer: "Formfeed??"

OR

A man attempting to set up his new printer called the printer's tech support number, complaining about the error message: "Can't find the printer." On the phone, the man said he even held the printer up in front of the screen, but the computer still couldn't find it.

AND

Customer: "What am I getting a keyboard error for? The keyboard isn't even plugged in!"

Some days it doesn't pay to get up in the morning.

Les Shewchuk

The Review:

Six String Samurai

Let's mess with our cultural icons. It's a post-apocalypse world. In 1957, the Russians dropped the bomb - and that was the end of civilization as we know it. What's left? The bullets ran out in '58 - there's nothing but the man and his sword - and his '57 six string guitar.

Buddy is on his way to the mythical Lost Vegas, where Elvis saved the vestiges of society from the Red menace. But Elvis is dead and Lost Vegas needs a new King. Buddy isn't the only samurai en route. There's the cool, the Clint, the Pin Heads, and the bone heads. There's also Death and his Band of archers - and he aims to kill any who seeks the Throne. The cast of characters is fun and crazy.

But Buddy has a weakness. He saved a kid from a band of Neanderthal wanderers. Now the Kid wants to come along. The story is a simple journey through combat and challenges. They meet the Cleavers and the Red Army. They meet the Windmill people in the Down Below. Buddy accepts the Kid eventually; the Kid learns to be like Buddy. I won't give away the end. Trust me, the plot is a hero's journey through the waste land of some of our

modern myths - reductio ad absurdum americanus.

The action flew in 60s samurai movie style: lots of action, cutting, slashing, falling bodies. Blood only appeared in brief glints on hard steel. There are many cool moments. Buddy, dropping the final stroke of a battle, pausing in Zen moment, then pushing his taped-together glasses the quarter inch they had slipped. The lines "A '46 Chevy can beat a '57 Mav anytime - in the first quarter mile that is." "Kid, you don't say squat all this time and now you're tellin me a '46 Chevy can beat a '57 Mav? I liked you better when you didn't say squat."

I thoroughly enjoyed this movie. It had flaws. It was totally derivative.

But it played with the derivations so much, so fast, it had me laughing with it, not at it.

I recommend this movie for any action fiend, for any cult movie creature, for any B film buff. Never let them scratch your guitar, and never let the last words you hear be "Now, surrender to the power of heavy metal!"



Alan

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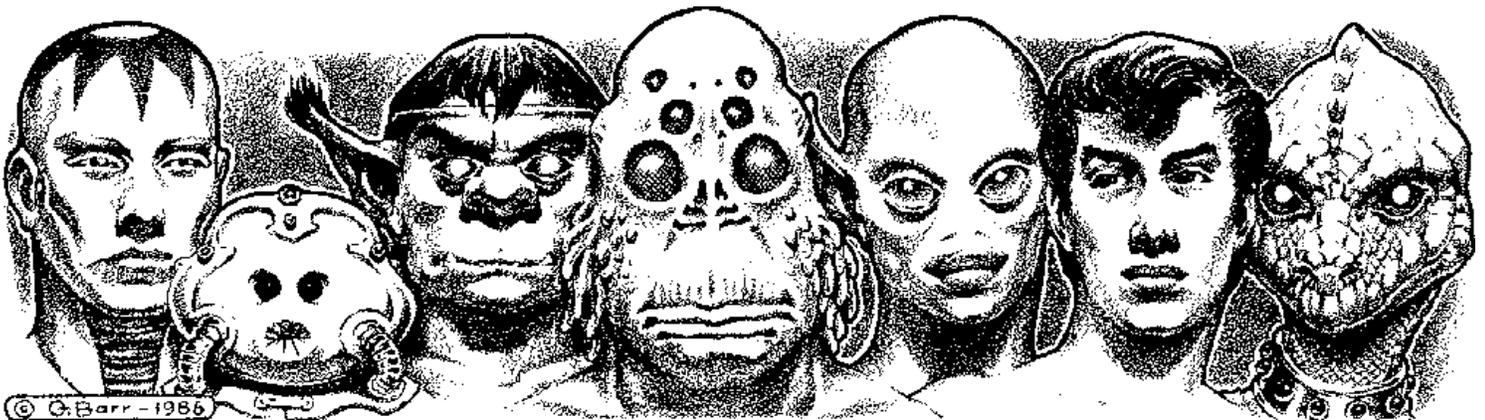
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October 26th 1998

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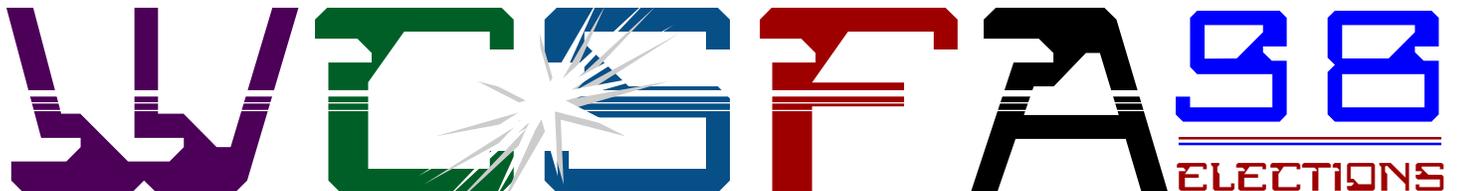
WCSFA Executive Elections	Incumbent	Candidates
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• Vice President	Palle Hoffstein	Palle Hoffstein
• Treasurer	Dolores Poirier	Dolores Poirier
• Secretary	R. Graeme Cameron	R. Graeme Cameron
• Archivist	R. Graeme Cameron	R. Graeme Cameron
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• V-Con 24 Rep	Les Shewchuk	Don McGovern
• Member at Large (1)	David Langtry	Lisa Gemino, David Langtry
• Member at Large (2)	Dawna Read	Dawna Read
• Member at Large (3)	Steve Forty	Pauline Walsh, Steve Forty
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"The few. The proud. The politics. The intrigue. Be a part of the executives!"

It takes all kinds...



If there was ever a part of the new BCSFAzine that was perfect for this page it would be the World Wide Web listings. Each month I come up with a topic and search the net for related sites. Each month I hear people complain about the waste of space this article is and how anyone without a computer could not possibly be interested in it. There were also comments on how the URL's lacked any insight on the web pages themselves. Well, here it is, the best of two worlds. Only people with web access can get this page and I have also included the summaries that accompanied the listings.

[WebStation: Oops!](#)

URL: <http://www.furry.com/>

Summary: You're going the wrong way! The FurryMUCK WebStation is over here ! Please update all bookmarks to reflect the new URL: <http://www.furry.com/index.shtml> .

[PlacePhatCat's Furry Online Art Archive and Meeting Place](#)

URL: <http://members.tripod.com/~PhatCat93/index.htm>

Summary: Welcome to PhatCat's Furry Online Art Archive & Meeting Place This is my little corner of the internet where you can come view furry artwork, learn more about up and coming events, find furies across the nation, see where any chat servers are, get info on what a "furry and/or the fandom lifestyle fursuiting" is, and get to know me.

[Welcome Furies!](#)

URL: <http://members.tripod.com/~KidRaccoon/welcome.html>

Summary: Rocky's stories have offended - - people since February 24, 1998. Greetings my fellow furry (and not so furry) friends, and welcome to my humble home on the web. I've put my stories here to share with the furry and the gay/lesbian/bi communities.

[The Polar Den Web Page](#)

URL: <http://www.polariden.org/>

Summary: The Goal of the Polar Den is, and always has been, to spread Anthropomorphic Fandom . As I learn of particular Furry info, I will add it here. If you know of something Furry that would be appropriate for this page, E-Mail me at darrelx (at) home.com and I will consider adding it in.

[NOBS' friends](#)

URL: <http://www.bnd.de/tigress/nobs/html/friends.html>

Summary: This page is mainly dedicated to those with an own page (it's a linky world :-). Only some of my local close friends are mentioned here. furry is for the friends in furry fandom, I met in RL e.g.

[The Furry Search: The 100% Furry Search System](#)

URL: <http://furry.ml.org/>

Summary: The FurrySearch Engine, for the furr by the furr! In this search engine you can look on keywords but also on in directories, par example if you are looking for The Lion King but you don't know exactly wich site then you can always go to our directory of the Lion King and click around, we also have a BBS (Bulletin Bord Service), all links are checked once a week

[Orlando Furry Archives](#)

URL: <http://furry.ao.net/>

Summary: Welcome to the Orlando Furry Archives Some of the pictures on this site can have adult themes. By clicking on the links below you agree that you are of legal age of consent in your area to view such work.

[LEN's in the fuzz HOME PAGE](#)

URL: <http://users.ccnet.com/~lcanders/welcome.html>

Summary: in the fuzz is about making "furry" costumes. A "furry" costume can be a mascot, a life-size re-creation of a cartoon figure, a real animal, a mythological or fantasy creature, or some combination of any of these.

[sci-fi Furies](#)

URL: <http://cannylink.com/sci-fifuries.htm>

Summary: Anthropomorphic Animal Art by Joe Ekaitis - possibly the only place where you'll see a huge hare destroying the Eiffel Tower, a giant paranoid wolf and a Godzilla-sized Bugs Bunny wreaking havoc on the NRA.

[Usenet](#)

URL: <http://wolf.tierranet.com/usenet.htm>

Summary: On the Usenet side of the Internet, there are many groups that may be of interest to furry fandom in general. Below is a list of furry newsgroups and related groups... Widely Distributed Furry Fandom Groups:

[Untitled](#)

URL: <http://www.triode.net.au/~dragon/links4.html>

Summary: I don't check all of these regularly, if you find a link that's broken, please let me know. Last revised 9th September, 1997. Some furry sites contain material that could be considered erotica. Check out my art links for some more.

[Furry Friends' Store](#)

URL: <http://www.furryfriends.org/store/index.htm>

Summary: Furry FriendsPet Assisted Therapy Services Furry Friends' Store Wow, we're really starting to build up an inventory of Furry Friends "wearable" art! Remember, walking your furry friend on a "Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services" leash, or wearing a Furry Friends PATS T-shirt provides the purrrfect opportunity for you and your pet to jump-start" conversations about our organization...

[FVD : Furry Videogame Database](#)

URL: <http://www.tigerden.com/fvd/index.html>

Summary: What's New? 28th August, 1998 More news on Michael McGee's Quake 2 movie project has been made available via a post to aff. You can read it here . Michael McGee has posted a request on alt.fan.furry for help in a possible furry Quake 2 movie. You can view it here .

[YiffNet](#)

URL: <http://yiff.superior.net/>

Summary: YiffNet is the all- furry IRC network. It is owned and operated by furies, for furies. We don't (in general) go around kicking anyone else off, but there's very little point in using YiffNet unless you are interested in furry fandom.

[Actaeon's Furry Resources Page](#)

URL: <http://www57.pair.com/zeta/actaeon/furry.html>

Summary: (On the left: my first furry drawing! Yiff-bugle! :) Enough furry artists have drawn pictures of my character that I decided to add a page to show off their work. I'm flattered! :) Visit this site first: more furry links than you can shake a stick at. "If you can't find it at WhiteFire's, you can probably get along without it." There's a mirror at Snowfox .