

BCSFAzine #345

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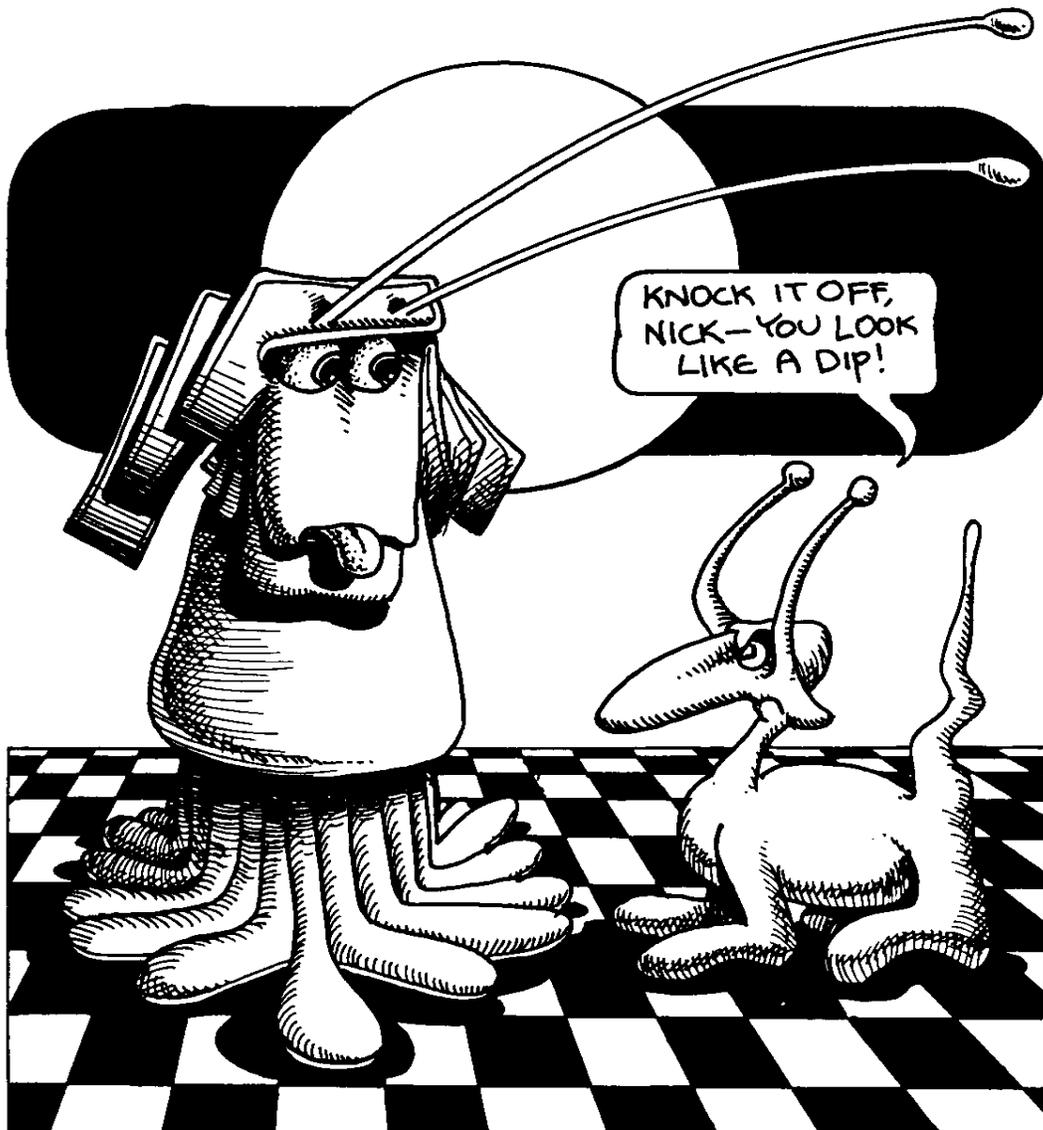
**The monthly newsletter of
the British Columbia Science Fiction Association**

Something to interest everyone!

Vol. 30 No. 2 * Feb. 2001

IN THIS ISSUE:

**CAN PUB NEWS * CON ORG NEWS * ZINE REVIEW
* LORD OF THE O.S. * MiC FOR HUGO *
COSTUMECON REPORT * TAG & BINK ARE DEAD**



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BCSFazine

Something to offend—interest everyone!

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BCSFA’s Web page may be viewed at <http://www3.telus.net/dh2/bcsfa/>.

The V-Con Society’s Web page may be viewed at <http://www3.telus.net/dh2/vconsociety/>.

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Art Credits

This month’s cover artist: Brad Foster
p. 9 Garth Spencer
p. 12 Colin Upton

EVENTS UPCOMING

February

Saturday Feb 9 at 7pm: **Feeding Frenzy** at The Russian & Ukranian Restaraunt, 3124 Main St., Vancouver. The perogies as legendary, especially the varieties used for desserts. No need to contact the organizer; Just show up hungry.

Feb. 22: **BCSFazine** deadline

Feb. 24: V-Con Society Meeting (VCon 27 progrep)

March

Mar. 8: **BCSFazine** mailout

Mar. 22: **BCSFazine** deadline

THIRD WEEKEND - AUCTION AT STEVE’S!

Plain Speaking

HEY KIDS, LET'S HAVE A CONTEST

With last issue I invited BCSFA members to take part in a contest: spot all the mistakes Garth made in the last issue! How many mistakes did you spot? The member who spots the most mistakes gets a free Neat Thing from the Garth Spencer Memory Hole, I mean fanzine collection, *and* you can give Garth a boot to the head!

THINGS THAT WERE WRONG WITH BCSFAZINE #344

- gibbled spacing on the front page volume & number
- missing number on the inside front cover volume & number
- outdated server listed for the BCSFA listserv @dress & URL
- club news out of order
- *Ansible* subscription information was *all wrong*
- half the page numbers missing
- one half-page entirely blank
- uneven type size through the fanzine

THE CURSE OF ~~LONO~~ CHARLIE BROWN

Some people, specifically Barb Dryer, have pointed out how many promises and obligations I have forgotten since I took over editorship of this zine. (*Catch me up on what I still forget!*) This isn't just a subject for the mistake contest. This is a subject of concern to BCSFA members.

I have a memory like a steel sieve. Rusted shut, some days.

I blame this on a Curse which was laid on me in childhood, when I somehow offended a Little Red-Haired Girl. Over time this curse has broadened its effect until I not only can't get a girlfriend, I have no charisma, I have no leadership capability, I ask a gang of people to do things and they don't know I've addressed them, employers advertising for help keep losing my resumes, and I can't get a plumber on weekends, either.

Or I just have a semantic problem in communicating with other people.

HEY KIDS, LET'S MAYBE START AN APA

During one of my manic phases I was thinking of starting an apa, sort of by way of restarting BCAPA and/or Canfandom and/or CANADAPA. When I recovered I was still thinking about it, but I had enough caution to ask whether this is a Good Idea.

Graeme wanted to promote hardcopy fanpublishing with Canfandom. What I would like to accomplish, with an apa, is to review basic information about contemporary fandom, especially Canadian fandom in the Northwest, and by reviewing it, turn up and correct any mistaken assumptions that are floating around; and outside of this focus, place contemporary western Canadian fandom in context – the context of the Northwestern congoing circuit, of Canadian fandom and its tentative Convention ties, and of fandom at large.

What is an apa, you may be asking, and what would you have to do with it? Well, if you'd *like* to participate, you would send in a minimum number of pages per mailout ("minac") to a Central Mailer. Maybe you'd copy up your contribution ("apazine") to the number per mailout the CM specifies ("copy count"), or maybe the CM can maintain a fund for the members' photocopy and postage costs. The Central Mailer collates the copies of everybody's contributions, and sends them the collated copies. That's an apa: an amateur publication association.

Until the mid-80s apas were one way fans responded to rising postage costs, rather than by issuing fanzines to anyone and everyone. After the mid-80s, when the Internet became more and more popular and accessible, newsgroups and later listservs assumed a lot of the functions of apas (... including, I should say, wandering off the point, and descending to the kind of querulous personal fights that we now call flaming). There are still several apas going, however.

Cautionary note: I have been told I might do better to just join existing apas. Also, newsgroups and listservs may obviate the need for apas. Then again, they may not: I'm beginning to suspect there's an upper limit to the total number of people you can communicate

with, call it a “communication horizon”, and beyond that you simply *cannot* convey or receive news. If it’s true, it’s disheartening.

Why would I bother, anyway? Well ... my experience of fandom is that we tolerate rather a high degree of *unawareness, or actual misinformation*. For one thing: It took a few months to realize that nobody had been dropping off copies of *BCSFazine* for sale at White Dwarf Books. For another thing: At least a month after Paul Carpentier’s press release about VikingCon 19, at least one member of the SF Northwest listserv *still* did not know they had changed their dates for 2002. Even more: I had to cause a commotion online recently to get some Alberta fans to tell me what the recent history of NonCon was; I did not know that NonCon simply wasn’t held in 2001, and I had been emailing Craig Dyck, and

the subsequent 2000 email contact, trying to elicit more information. Your own experience may show that a good many contemporary fans do not realize there is anything in fandom outside of gaming or anime, or comics or Star Trek.

People have already heard me rant about how new conrunners may have *no* idea of realistic budgeting, or the hurdles to inviting actors to appear as guests. For instance, a fanfiction publisher we will not name thought to start a new “relaxacon”, with a decided media-SF emphasis; evidently they were naïve about relaxacons.

I tend to think that promoting a sense of history in fandom is the main remedy for the troubles they will face, but that’s just me.

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<i>The BCSFA Member’s Handbook</i> (2 nd edition), a reference guide and orientation handbook to the British Columbia Science Fiction Association, and a general guide to science fiction fandom in the Pacific Northwest, Canada, and beyond (soon to be posted to the BCSFA website and Steve Samuel’s site)	US\$6.00/C\$8.00
<i>The Horror from Howe Sound #1: Corrosive Collations of Convention Catastrophe</i> , a collection of “fiascon” stories	US\$5.00/C\$7.00
<i>Canadian SF Markets</i> (irregularly updated): a chapbook guide to genre markets in Canada (soon to be posted to http://www.vcn.bc.ca/rsn/)	US\$2.00/C\$3.00
Selected back issues of fanzines such as <i>Maple Leaf Rag</i> , <i>The World According to Garth</i> , <i>Sercon Popcult Litcrit Fanmag</i> and <i>The Royal Swiss Navy Gazette</i>	US\$0.75/C\$1.00
<i>The following pamphlets are still in progress: Organized Chaos: on SF conventions; The Relatively Free Press: on SF fanzines; Tales from a Little Land: a survey of SF fandoms</i>	

Stop Press is happy to accept topic suggestions, and manuscript submissions, if there’s something you want to see in print ...

Letters of Comment

Harry Warner Jr., 423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown,
MD 21740, USA (Dec. 15/01)

Lest I fall behind again, here are a few lines of comment on the December issues of *BCSFazine*, accompanied by my wishes for a good holiday season for everyone out there.

You're right about fannish slang sometimes changing its meaning over the years. "GAFIA" is an obvious example, since it originally signified retreating from the mundane world to fandom, and eventually had exactly the opposite significance. "Sercon" for a few years was a sort of honour, meaning a fan was both serious and constructive in nature. Then it became an insult as a description of a deadly dull practitioner of fanac. I'm sure subfandoms have enough slang terms peculiar to themselves only to bewilder those of us who spend most of our time with fanzine fandom. I don't even try to keep up with computer fandom, where a participant was told to hit a certain key to accomplish something on his machine, but it now seems to occur when someone takes a look at something on the Internet.

(Life and change. It happens.)

Meanwhile, I'm glad to see in this issue an explanation of what FRED stands for. Several times I was tempted to ask but was afraid it would stamp me as a neofan to make such a request.

(Oh, jeez, we never explained that?! I thought we had ...)

I assume that several references to *James Lovecraft* in Donna's book section were typos. Lovecraft as a family name is supposed to have become dead and gone with the passing of H.P. Lovecraft, although there seem to have been several attempts to borrow it, including one rock group.

(If I'd been doing my job properly I would have read Donna McMahon's book reviews more carefully and asked her what she meant to write.

(For those of you who don't know the reference – one of the best-known figures in 20th-century horror fiction was Howard Phillips Lovecraft, who originated what is known as the "Cthulhu Mythos", a series of stories about appalling Elder Gods who inhabited the primeval Earth and have lain asleep in forgotten ruins for stupen-

dous eons of time.)

I also was unaware that Canada has its Thanksgiving Day more than a month earlier than the United States. The holiday was originally meant to show gratitude for a good harvest, so the different dates might result from the fact that it's colder in Canada and crops are reaped sooner than down here in the southlands.

(That's what I inferred, too. At least in normal years. We had drought conditions on the Prairies in 2001. And could you believe the weather patterns this winter?! Golfing weather in Ontario, and deep snowfall in the Deep South?)

The Harry Potter books continue to distress some people around Hagerstown. There seems to be no complaint about their quality, but objections continue to them on the grounds that they might encourage kids to meddle in witchcraft. One advertisement offered free copies of a videotape to anyone interested in learning details of this opinion.

(That again? –At least that was my first reaction. Then, in email, I learned that similar complaints are being made in places as far afield as New Mexico – a fannish listserv forwarded me a news story about a book-burning, swear to God, in Alamogordo.

(The sheltered simpleminded churchgoers who take fantasy too seriously would benefit from news that demonstrates how anarchic modern witches and pagans are; or from evidence that magic is ineffectual. But I guess they're not open to new input.)

Lloyd&Yvonne Penney <penneys@netcom.ca>,
January 17, 2002

I am starting to emerge from some late hibernation. I just can't get going when it comes to writing letters in the new year, and my IN box is starting to fill up. Then, I noticed that deadline is tomorrow, and this is the 30th year of *BCSFazine*, and congratulations to all! Time to get in gear and start writing. So, here are some comments on *BCSFazine* 344.

(Response: so am I. I mean, I was sleeping until 2:00 or 4:00 p.m., most of the winter!)

Most fans know what they want. Big cons, giant projects, lots of activities, and someone

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else to run it all. Those who have run the show in the past are tired and fried, and are slowing down, hoping that someone else is willing to take up the slack, hoping in vain. Democracy doesn't work in clubs, because too many members do not see the club as theirs, but as belonging to those in charge. They go to meetings to see what those At The Front will say/do/suggest/propose what the club should do, never thinking that perhaps they could or should pitch in and help. I paid good money for this membership; what do I get for it?, they say. (I hope someone recognizes themselves in that phrase...) This happens just too often. Garth, what happens when the Benevolent Dictators burn out, and toss up their hands in resignation? End of club. At least with some measure of democracy, there is the opportunity to nurture at least some small guilt someone might have about not doing more, and the opportunity to tell that person that their input is valuable and needed, without taking advantage of him/her. Or maybe I truly

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am the incurable optimist Dale Speirs says I am.
(Response: very neatly put! Was it ever thus, or do we have a Clue here to how people end up acting, after the conventional conditioning we get?)
*(I'm glad you go into more detail than I did, and ask a pointed question like "what happens when the Benevolent Dictators burn out...?" I wanted to provoke some dialogue, or at least some controversy, rather than provide answers. Emphasis on 'provoke'.
(Well? Doesn't anyone else have a response to my last editorial?)*

From here, I'll jump over to a letter from Andrew Brechin. He said that at the Illuminares, people will do as they please, and not take part in the games and activities set up for them. Fans are much the same, too. They'll go to a convention, and panels and other particular activities go wanting while the majority of people attending will sightsee, party, hang out...we've all done this, and enjoyed it, too, but so many conven-

tion-engineered activities are ignored, and at the bitch panel people complain about the programming. They don't know what they want, but they sure as hell know what they don't want, which makes a con's efforts to improve a con a shot in the dark at best. I am waiting for someone to start DoasyoupleaseCon 1, with no programming or guests. There's some open function space and a big con suite, where you can do what you want, but you have to be in charge of it. Most will stand around, sightsee, hang out, etc., but some will get some activities going. Some will take part, but go back to what they were doing before, if they were doing anything at all. They'll gather with friends, have some fun and go home happy. Maybe it's a giant relaxicon. Sounds great, but it isn't the ideal situation, because this con sounds like a mighty big daycare, with some mighty big children, paying \$40 prereg, at \$50 at the door. It's been much better than this before, and I wish it could be again. It's just a matter of everyone Giving a Damn, which a real stretch, even for an incurable optimist.

(Response: are you talking about a specific con, or congoing in general?)

Harry Warner may also be talking about that pain of pains with telephone calls, the area code overlay. Area code 416 is fairly full, even after the 416/905 division some years ago, so now, the overlay of area code 647 has taken place. I don't know of anyone who has a telephone number in this AC, and I may not find out about anyone who is in this code until next year's telephone book comes out. I imagine there are some fans who do not imbibe at all, and some fans who imbibe sparingly, as I do. (I still remember BC cider with fondness...) Some drink a little too much, and some get...well, they drink 'til they're pissed, and someone has to pour them back into their rooms. I don't understand that, I never have, and perhaps I never will, with luck. Presumably, these are adults who put down their money for a good time and some adult refreshments, which I am all in favour of, seeing I've been to a few cons where the con suite served nothing but Kool-Aid and Rice Krispie squares. But, because we think we're the centre of attention, simply because we paid to get in, some will always abuse what they get in exchange. Cons here usually have someone in the con suite dispensing the beer, someone who has worked as a bartender, and who knows enough to tell the tipsier ones that they're cut

off. Some of them will go out and buy more beer outside the convention, but there's not a lot anyone can do about that short of calling the police and having then charged with public drunkenness, or something similar.

(Response: do we have another couple of clues here?)

I dislike terms like "literary fandom" and "litfan" and "mediafan", but given my own experiences with such conventions and fans, and how divergent I've seen the two general groups become, I am forced to use those terms. General conventions contain both literary and media SF interests, but there are so few people with overlapping interests, there might as well be two conventions going on, with one sneering at the other. We have been conversing about how the general convention is going away... Again, this is based on my own experiences of conventions trying to bridge the gap by trying to cater to various interests, and satisfying none of them. This is what happened to the long-gone and lamented Maplecon in Ottawa. Duncan MacPherson might be able to confirm this.

(I was going to ask you if general conventions have in fact been outpopulated by special-interest conventions. The key thing here seems to be how normal it is for people to enter one subfandom, exclusively. So, you're telling me the attitude between subfandoms is mutual contempt? I hadn't established that. Maybe I'm missing a lot that goes on.)

Our trip report on Millennium Philcon ... last night, the Canadian dollar hit an all-time low of 61.86 cents, or about Can\$1.64 to buy an American dollar. With this in mind, ConJosé is simply out of the question for us. We would have needed to start saving for it a couple of years ago. We've been to California before, but this was when the Can\$ was valued at more like 80 cents US. So, we are looking forward to Torcon 3, and hoping that we might be able to take part in it.

Our own local convention, Ad Astra, will be taking place in about three weeks. For the first time in 20 years, neither of us is on the committee, so I'll be able to attend, have some fun, stage a party or two and write a review. Perhaps I can forward that report to you for a future issue. Until then, take care, and I look forward to issue 345.

CostumeCon 19

(Calgary, May 25-28, 2001)

by members of the Western Canadian
Costumers' Guild

Co-chairs Cliff Samuels and Eileen Capes write:

CostumeCon 19 was a definite success. Attendance was 250 people. About 200 were full members and the rest were day passes, evening passes or supporting members. We had three streams of programming and another of workshops. Both the Historic and SF & F masquerades were well attending. The doll contest was one of the largest in many years with over 50 entries.

The attendees also took good advantage of our excursions and raved about Callebaut

chocolate factory tour. The trip to the Sari district to purchase East Indian fabrics was a huge success. As one of our drivers put it, "It was like a horde of locusts ...". For the Americans the prices were so low that they were purchasing entire bolts of fabric.

Financially the convention did very well. Part of the remaining funds has been given out to the next three CostumeCons. The remainder will be going to the Calgary costumer's guild to help put on workshops.

Both Eileen and I are very happy it's done, but it did show the costuming community that Calgary can put on a first-rate event. In just over a month CC20 will be happening in Melbourne.

*From: Cliff Samuels and Eileen Capes
<capsam@nucleus.com>, 8 Jan 2002*

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
EDE8209450920F923A40EE10E510CC98D444AA08E324

"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."*

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

NORTHWEST CONVENTIONS

I am still looking for more information on the following conventions for this year:

ENFILADE! (May, Tacoma)
CON (August, Portland?)
NONCON (August/October, Alberta?)
INCON (October?, Spokane)
CON-FUSION (October, Victoria)

FEBRUARY 2002

Feb. 8: **Conspiracy 2002** (a gaming con) at the Mission City Lodge in Mission, B.C. Memberships range from \$10 (Friday only) to \$40 (all weekend). Write Mission Games, 33124 First Ave., Mission, B.C. V2V 1G4, or telephone 604-820-3224 or 1-888-21-GAMES between 12 and 6.

Feb. 15-17: **RadCon 3B** at the Pasco, WA Double Tree Inn (Pasco/TriCities, Washington). RadCon's Artist GOH: Theresa Mather! RadCon's Science GOH: Les Johnson! RadCon's Writer GOH: Kay Kenion! RadCon's Fan GOH: Edgar and Norma Lincoln! RadCon's Special Science GOH: CatTails! Features of Radcon include Card Gaming, Artshow, Dealers Room, Critter Crunch, Masquerade, Gaming. This year's RadCon will be held at the Pasco, WA Double Tree Inn. This is the same hotel that we have been in for the last four years. Rooms will go fast, so please make your reservations early! Hotel Info: Pasco Double Tree Hotel, 2525 N. 20th, Pasco, WA; Reservations: (509) 547-0701. Be sure to mention that you are part of RadCon for our special rates! Membership Price: \$20.00. URL: <http://radcon.yi.org>

Feb. 22-24, 2002: **Potlatch 11** at The Best Western Executive Inn in Seattle, Washington. A

discussion-oriented science fiction convention; A gathering of the writers and readers of literary science fiction and fantasy at which participants exchange ideas. Memberships: \$75 at the door. You may purchase memberships by printing out and mailing the Registration Form, with a check. If you're wondering if you have your membership yet, you can view our current membership list. See the Web Site <http://www.potlatch-sf.org/> Contact Potlatch at: kate@oz.net or: Potlatch 11, 2002, PO Box 31848 Seattle, WA 98103-1848, U.S.A.

MARCH 2002

March 1-3: **LoneGunCon** at the Travelodge in West Seattle, Washington: a Lone Gunmen/X Files convention, sponsored by the GunFen, weirdest of the weird Philes. The con will feature a Lone Gunmen video marathon (we're going to see if we can rent a big screen tv for it), a special charity fundraiser for the independent short film "Tilt" starring Tom Braidwood (Frohike), a panel and party party with the makers of the film, fanfic readings, and a charity raffle for the film sponsored by the Frohike Liberation Organization. Prizes will include *X-Files*, *Lone Gunmen*, and *Tilt*-related items. Membership will be \$10, and room rates are cheap! Supporting (non-attending donations) and Media memberships are available for \$5. For more information about the Con and a registration form, go to: <http://lonegunmen.furvect.com/lgmcon.htm> A website about "Tilt" and our fund-raising activities for the project will be up shortly. Erynn <inislglas@seanet.com>, Jan. 12, 2002

March 8-10: **Gamestorm 2002** at the Doubletree Hotel Columbia River in Portland, Oregon. (A gaming con.) Memberships range from US\$15 (Friday only, in advance) to \$30 (full weekend, at the door). Write Gamestorm 2002, P.O. Box 764, Portland, OR 97207, or see <http://www.pdxgames.com/> for online registration. Game Storm 2002 is sponsored by Oregon Science Fiction Conventions, Inc. (OSFCI), a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation.

March 8-10; Time: 10:00 am to 6:00 pm: **RingCon**, in Gig Harbor, Washington: a Middle-Earth convention based upon the story line and

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characters of J. R. R. Tolkien's novels. Program to include: Entertainment by Heather Alexander and other performers, costume contest, costume ball, fantasy art show, fantasy authors forum and book signing, table role playing games, live role playing games, video room, presentations and guest speakers, filk music competition, and much more. Sponsored by The Washington Renaissance Fantasy Faire in Gig Harbor. Location: the INN at Gig Harbor, 3211 - 56th. St. NW., Gig Harbor, WA. 98335; tel (253) 858-1111. For further information: www.ringcon.com.

March 15-17: **Trumpeter Salute 2002** at the Bonsor Community Centre, 6550 Bonsor St., Burnaby, B.C. (A gaming con.) Contact Steve Allen at 604-889-4970 / big_dog@telus.net or Eric Hotz at 604-619-6925 / erichotz@direct.ca.

March 21-24: **Left Coast Crime 12** at the Doubletree Hotel Columbia River in Portland, Oregon. Theme: "Slugs and Roses". GoH: Laurie R. King. FanGoH: Don Herron. TM: G.M. Ford. URL <http://www.spiritone.com/~jlorentz/leftcoast/>. Write to Left Coast Crime 12, P.O. Box 18033, Portland, OR 97218-0033; tel. (503) 281-9449; email wrigcros@teleport.com.

March 24: **Vancouver Comicon**. For more information please call 604-322-6412 or e-mail lswong@uniserve.com. Also see <http://mypages.uniserve.com/~lswong/Comicon.html>

March 28-31: **Norwescon 25** in SeaTac, Washington. Guests of Honor: Writer, Jack Vance; Fan, Andrew Porter; Spotlitged Publisher, Wizards of the Coast. Our theme: "In the land of the Emerald City". Norwescon is a large regional Science Fiction and Fantasy convention in Washington State. Norwescon will attract over 100 professional guests and 2500 fans to the Seattle-Tacoma area. Memberships at the door \$60. Contact Information: Norwescon 24, PO Box 68547, Seattle, WA 98168-0547, Email: info@norwescon.org. See <http://www.norwescon.org>

APRIL 2002

Apr. 5-7: **Weekend with the Night Owl**, a "multi-fandom" (actually media-oriented) relaxacon at the Landis Hotel & Suites in Vancouver, B.C. (Davis x Hornby), sponsored by Blackfly Presses. Focus includes Dark Angel, Stargate SG-1, and Sentinel fandoms; member-

ship includes tour of filming sites; a group dinner offered for an additional \$C30. Registrations US\$30 to K. Simpson at Blackfly Presses, Yonge and Eglinton Postal Service, 2300 Yonge St., P.O. Box 67064, Toronto, ON M4P 3C8, attention: HauntFox.

Apr. 5-7: **Anime Oasis** at the Best Western Inn in Boise, ID. Guests: Stacie Renna (voice of "Iria"), Studio Happy Chicken, Yume no Senshi (a cosplay group). Memberships US\$30 to March 1, \$35 up to the door, payable to Jeremy Lopett, Anime Oasis, 420 North 9th Ave., Nampa, ID 83687.

Apr. 14: **Toy, Model & Collectables Show**. For more information please call 604-322-6412 or e-mail lswong@uniserve.com Also see <http://mypages.uniserve.com/~lswong/Comicon.html>

APR. 26-27: **Dak Kon VII** in Comox, BC; Vancouver Island's wargame con. Advanced Dungeons & Dragons; Warhammer 40,000 Tournament; Magic; the Gathering Tournament; Warhammer Fantasy; 6th Edition Tournament. Info: Members.home.com/baddog117/dakkon.htm

Apr. 26-28: **Sakura Con 2002** at the Seattle Airport Hilton in SeaTac, Washington. Guests will include: Hiroki Hayashi; others TBA. (This is the fifth outing for what is without a doubt the anime convention in the Seattle/Tacoma region.) Registration US\$45 to March 31, US\$50 at the door, children 6 to 12 half-prize. Write to Sakura-Con-Registration, 900 Meridian Ave. E #19-407, Milton, WA 98354-7019, or see URL <http://www.sakuracon.org>.

Apr. 26-28: **Game Faire 2002** SFCC Spokane, Washington. (A gaming con.) More info coming-see URL <http://www.gorillabobs.com/gf2002.html>

Oct. 4-6: **SterlingCon 2002** in the Student Union Building of Spokane Falls Community College (The same GREAT location as GameFaire). The Convention Committee is busy contacting game companies to send reps, finding just the right panelists to host talks for the attendees, as well as LOTS of great gaming events to satisfy everyone. More information will be forthcoming as other plans are finalized.

"Al Beddow" <awb_gaming@hotmail.com>

19 Jan 2002

Media File

A miscellany of media news

from the Made in Canada newsletter:

Among the questions from fans posted on the Space Q&A page on Dec. 7, 2001 were: "Do you have any plans to air the new *Babylon 5: Legend of the Rangers* movie? Also, could you please play the series again?" Answer: "We are looking into getting *Babylon 5: Legend of the Rangers* for our eager Space viewers; however, we don't know when this will be possible. As for the B5 series, the contract ran out for it. We may get the show again, but we don't know at this time." The Rangers movie will air on the Sci Fi Channel on Sat. Jan. 19 at 9 p.m. ET/PT. Recent interviews with the Rangers cast (most of whom are Canadian) and B5 creator J. Michael Straczynski can be found here. The transcript of a chat with Dylan Neal (who plays David Martel) can be found here.

Al Gough, executive producer of *Smallville*, says that the show will change its storytelling approach in the second half of the season. Upcoming episodes: In "Rogue," Clark visits Metropolis and does a good deed that's witnessed by a police inspector (Cameron Dye) who then coerces Clark to join forces with him. Meanwhile, Lex receives an intriguing proposal from an old flame, Victoria (Kelly Brook). In "Shimmers," Lex and Victoria start working together to destroy their fathers' empires. (Victoria also has a rich, cruel father.) In "Hug," the lives of two travelling farm equipment salesmen who were in *Smallville* during the meteor shower are greatly affected: one man becomes wealthy and the other, a recluse.

John Shea, who plays Adam on *Mutant X*, says that producers have addressed complaints about the show's preponderance of slow-motion shots, and the changes will be evident in episodes airing in January. "Every once in a while, there's a moment where you need to slow it down, because something will happen so quickly you can't see it," Shea said. "But what we've done is bring someone in from Jackie Chan's organization to work with us here as one of our stuntmen. Our fight coordinator works with Jet Li and comes from Hong Kong. So what we've decided is that when we shoot a fight scene, we're going to devote much more time to it."

Nana Visitor — who played Madame X/Renfro in *Dark Angel* — told *Sci Fi Wire* that her character's speedy demise in the second-season premiere, "Designate This," resulted from her decision not to stay with the show. She had been set to become a series regular, and then the producers "decided that they wanted to make the show's target audience younger and didn't want anyone over 40, really 35, in the cast," Visitor said. "So they fired everyone that was older, except John Savage. And they offered me the same deal that they did him, a recurring role. Well, financially, I couldn't keep up an apartment I own in New York and take two boys to Vancouver." Upcoming *Dark Angel* episodes: In "Brainiac," when a militant group that has helped Logan in the past comes under fire, all signs point to a Manticore-engineered military strategist. In "Pain Boy," Alec can't stop thinking about his last Manticore mission and the mistakes of his past. In "Borrowed Time," Max and Logan find a cure for their genetically engineered virus, but must set aside thoughts of romance to stop a Manticore creation on the loose.

New episodes of *Andromeda* air in mid-January. Here's some spoilage. The upcoming episode "Bunker Hill" was supposed to feature the return of James Marsters ("Spike" on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*) as the Nietzschean Charlemagne Bolivar, who last appeared in "Into the Labyrinth." Despite the character's popularity and Marsters' expressed willingness to reprise his role, Tribune (the production studio) reportedly refused to meet his price.

MiC 21 Jan 6/02



VCon 27

(Vancouver's oldest annual science fiction convention)

October 11-13, 2002
at the Sheraton Guildford Hotel in Surrey, B.C.

Guests of Honour:

Tim Powers (author of *Declare*, *Last Call* and *The Anubis Gates*, etc.)

James Blaylock (*The Land of Laughs*, etc.)

Gary Gygax (creator of "Dungeons & Dragons", "Legendary Adventure" and other role-playing games)

Other guests: **Ryan Nicholson** (Flesh and Fantasy Inc., one of Canada's premier make-up/prosthetics/FX houses); **John Gajdecki**; others TBA.

Featuring: gaming, artshow, dealers' room, anime, video room, writers' workshop, programming/guests, volunteering. For more specific information email vcon@shaw.ca or see <http://www.v-con.ca>.

Rooms: call the Sheraton Guildford Hotel in Surrey, B.C., 15269 - 104 Avenue, Surrey, B.C., Canada (Tel. 1.604.582.9288 or 1.800.661.2818 for room reservations - mention VCon 27) or see URL: <http://www.sheratonguildford.com>

Memberships: US\$15, C\$25 until March 31; US\$20, C\$35 until September 9; US\$30, C\$45 at the door.

Write: VCon 27, c/o Main Floor, 2116 Macdonald, Vancouver, B.C. CANADA V6K 3Y4;
see URL: <http://www.v-con.ca/index.html>; or email vcon@shaw.ca.

BENEFIT AUCTION NEEDS DONATIONS

Steve is holding an auction! The auction is to benefit VCon! We need auction items! I'm donating fanzines and weird books and T-shirts and buttons! You can donate stuff too! Get ahold of Steve! Here's his number! Here's his e-dress! You've got better ideas than I have! DONATE SOMETHING!

(Steve Forty, 1129 Spruce Ave., Coquitlam, BC V3J 2P3, steve40@telus.net)

Items for auction at Steve's place, 3rd weekend of March 2002

Doug Finnerty will be donating one case (12 bottles) of his home-made u-brew beer to the VCON fundraising auction.

Garth Spencer plans to donate assorted convention T-shirts, assorted convention buttons, a weird and wild selection of books, both fiction and nonfiction; fanzines including *Royal Swiss Navy Gazette* #6 and *Westwind* 257, 258, 259; and the following BCSFAzine back issues: *BCSFAzine* #339 (10 copies), *BCSFAzine* #340 (10 copies), *BCSFAzine* #341 (10 copies), *BCSFAzine* #342 (10 copies).

FANZINES

By Ted White

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

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

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

**

SCIENCE-FICTION FIVE-YEARLY #11 (Lee Hoffman, “Founder, editor emeritus;” Geri Sullivan, Jeff Schalles & Terry Hughes, “Guest editor-publishers” at 3444 Blaisdell Ave S., Minneapolis MN 55408-4315; e-mail to SFFY@toad-hall.com; available by request – no price listed but send a couple of bucks to cover postage)

Science-Fiction Five-Yearly occupies a unique position among fanzines: it has been published regularly since 1951. Once every lustrum – or half-decade – a new issue appears. For the first twenty-five years Lee Hoffman put them out by herself, but starting in 1976 she began using “guest editors” who did most of the scutwork of publishing. The first was Terry Hughes, who came back on board for this issue, but whose participation was tragically cut short by his sudden death from a brain tumour shortly before the issue was completed. Geri Sullivan and Jeff Schalles have produced the last couple of issues and have done most of the work on this one.

Over the years S-FF-Y has established certain traditions. In #2 (1956) both Robert

Silverberg (as “Calvin Aaargh”) and Harlan Ellison (as “Nalrah Nosille”) started serials which continued in subsequent issues (although occasionally in a perfunctory form). Ellison’s “!Nissassa” was revived in 1996 and has established yet another tradition – that of arriving just in the nick of time to be included. (I might add that I’ve been in every issue since #3.)

#11 – the 50th Anniversary issue – runs 42 pages of impeccable mimeoing from electrostencilled computer-set type, and the mimeography, following a tradition established in the first issue, makes use of coloured inks. In this S-FF-Y bears a family resemblance to Geri’s own fanzine, *Idea*. And to some extent, so do the contents.

Lee Hoffman offers an opening editorial and her blessings upon the enterprise of those who have carried on the task of producing S-FF-Y. Kip Williams contributes two fannish song pastiches, “The SF Family” and “All in the SF Family.” Greg Benford produces “How to Write a Scientific Paper” from years of pent-up frustrations with reading real scientific papers. Denny Lien turns his post to the Stumpers-L e-list into an article titled “A Treatise on Dot.Com(edy) With Purple Prose” – it deals in “academic” fashion with the lyrics of two ’50s rock’n’roll novelty records. Steve Stiles, in addition to a cover takeoff on 2001, has drawn a full-page piece, “Great Moments from Star Trek By Arthur C. Clarke,” which is a great sendup of both *Star Trek* and Clarke.

The star piece of the issue, however, is Dave Langford’s “The Secret History of *Ansible*,” a written version of a talk he gave at Tropicon/Fanhistoricon in November, 2000. In its ten pages Dave talks about the (then) 21 year history of *Ansible* by providing a series of anecdotes and quotes which stopped all too soon. Langford wins the Fanwriter Hugo with monotonous regularity every year – but probably is the best fanwriter we have now.

Following Langford’s piece is my own “Crime Stalks the Fanworld.” I’ve been writing faanfiction – fiction about fans – for S-FF-Y for years now. My “The Purple Fields of Fanac” first appeared in the 1981 issue and was serialized in the following three issues. This story is Complete In This Issue. Jeff Schalles’ “Never Back Up” talks about his days as a cab driver in

Pittsburgh twenty-five years ago. There is, for the first time, a letter column, and then – rushing to make the issue and virtually the last item in it – Harlan Ellison’s latest installment of

“!Nissassa.”

It’s both a solid issue and a Fannish Event and I recommend S-FF-Y highly.

—Ted White

TAG & BINK ARE DEAD

A comic book review by Doug Finnerty

Some years back, a movie called “Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead” came out. The plot showed those two scandal-knaviens (*Scandinavians? –GS*) bumbling their way through the background of “Hamlet”. And now Dark Horse Comics has a two issue miniseries out that takes this setup one step further. The plot? Two Rebel Alliance foot soldiers (Tag & Bink) bumble their way through the background of “Star Wars Episode Four”. With all those Rebel Alliance soldiers being taken down during the film’s opening sequence, you’d think this would be a very short comic book, right? Tag and Bink manage to escape (because Imperial Stormtrooper helmets lack peripheral vision, that’s why!) but wind up on the Death Star. So then they spend the rest of the movie trying to leave, while doing their best to stay out of trouble.

Of course they fail miserably on both counts.

Somehow, Tag and Bink survive the Death Star’s destruction to wind up as part of the backstory for “Episode Five”. Upon realizing that their rather cruel taunting of some guy named Boba Fett was very very stupid, Tag and Bink are off to Cloud City to visit Tag’s “good buddy”, Lando Calrissian (and collect on a “debt of honour”).

Well, that’s the story in a nutshell. While certain to offend a “true fan” of the Star Wars universe (and this might be why I have no time for “true fans” of any stripe) the *Tag & Bink* miniseries is highly recommended to anyone in need of a good laugh. It’s a crying shame that the series is over in two issues.

Of course it doesn’t have to be this way. Despite having the appearance of being a one-shot deal, the characters of Tag and Bink actually do develop significantly enough to be more than just ciphers. I really think there’s potential to have Tag and Bink bumble their way through the background of “Shadows of the Empire” and

“Return of the Jedi”. And then if they survive another encounter with Boba Fett, Tag and Bink can wander through the background of Dark Horse Comics’ various Star Wars spinoff projects, from the “Rogue Squadron” series to things like “Heir to Empire”, “The Truce at Bakura” and “Crimson Empire”.

So yes, Tag and Bink really do deserve to get their own series. With all that death and destruction occurring in the Star Wars universe to date (never mind what’s going on in the real world), I think we could all use some comic relief. And a series dealing with the lighter side of Star Wars could be just the right medicine for what ails gloomy fans like us.

The Tag and Bink issues came out sometime last fall, but may still be on the shelves of some of the better comic book dealers. Dark Horse Comics strongly recommends you check with your local sources before resorting to their website (which is www.darkhorse.com).



~~NOOSE~~ NOODGE NEWS

Regional

CON NEWS

As has happened before, I conceived the idea of a con calendar for this year at the last minute, this time as a BCSFA publication. And as usual, I found that not every convention being held this year is advertising yet, even by January. So much for that project.

Con (Portland in August), Con-Fusion (Victoria), Enfilade! (Tacoma in April), Incon (fall in Spokane) and NonCon (somewhere in Alberta) are the main mystery cons this year. For some I have only a date; for some I have not even that much hard information. I am making some inquiries.

Some new conventions have appeared in Washington State, including LoneGunCon (first weekend in March) and RingCon (second weekend in March, organized by the Washington Renaissance Faire). The organizers of RingCon appear to have lacked some information: for one thing, they scheduled the same weekend as GameStorm; for another, they are selling "tickets" rather than memberships, if you understand the distinction, and the "con" is open only from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

*John Bartley & Brenna Sharp
GPACG Digest, Jan. 10, 2002*

EDGE PUBLISHING NEWS:!

Sub-rights:

"*The Black Chalice* will be released as an ACE trade paperback on February 5th, 2002. That means *The Black Chalice* will be available from every book store and wherever else ACE books are sold – in North America, Canada and around the globe."

(NOTE: *The Black Chalice*, by Marie Jakober, was previously published by Edge Publishing of Calgary. -Ye Ed.)

New Editorial Manager:

"We are pleased to welcome Cheyenne Grewe to EDGE Science Fiction and Fantasy Publishing. Cheyenne is our new Editorial Manager (replacing Jackie Arnold). Her background includes editorial, design, and production; with personal interests in art, music, literature and, of course, science fiction and fantasy.

New Senior Editor:

"Jackie Arnold (our previous Editorial Manager) is now the Senior Editor – working with authors currently under contract.

New Website:

"The EDGE Science Fiction and Fantasy Publishing website has been upgraded. We invite everyone to view the new information and layout at:

<http://www.edgewebsite.com>

"In addition to the content changes, files have been re-named and a number of reader's suggestions have been implemented – making the new site easy to navigate and interesting to surf.

New EDGE Release:

LYSKARION: The Song of the Wind

by J. A. Cullum

EDGE Science Fiction and Fantasy Publishing
ISBN: 1-894063-02-3 / Now available
331 pages / Trade Paperback / \$20.95 CDN / \$13.95 USA

"see review at: **SFRevu.com**

<http://www.sfrevu.com/2001/9770%20Lsykarion/Book%20Review.htm>

CONTACT: Brian Hades, Edge Science Fiction and Fantasy Publishing, Box 1714, Calgary, AB T2P 2L7, Canada 403-254-0160
manager@edgewebsite.com <http://www.edgewebsite.com>"

(News Release - 15 Jan 2002)

BARNES BOOK RELEASE

"Come to the Party! On Saturday, March 2, science fiction author STEVEN BARNES would like to invite you to a concert and party celebrating his 50th birthday and the launch of his latest epic novel, *LION'S BLOOD*.

"*LION'S BLOOD*, an alternate history novel in which Islamic Africa colonized America first, bringing European slaves, has already been praised by writers ranging from Octavia Butler to Greg Bear to Harry Turtledove.

"Published by Warner/Aspectnovels, it promises to be Steve's best yet, and he wants to celebrate with you! We will have readings, signings, an 'oldies' dance, African drumming, free birthday cake, and a concert by the phe-

nomenal Celtic singer and musician HEATHER ALEXANDER.

“Heather, who wrote the book’s wonderful Irish slave songs, will be premiering her new CD *Insh’Allah*, a unique album of music set in the world of LION’S BLOOD! Heather’s spectacular music fuses Irish and Arabic melodies, creating songs of adventure, faith, and magic.

“It’s all ONLY 10.00, with all net profits going to the R.A. Long High School drama department!”

7:00 p.m. Saturday March 2nd, Kelso Theater Pub, 214 S. Pacific, Kelso, Washington; tel (360) 414-9451; URL <http://www.ktpub.com>

DER BLAU POWELL’S KULT

Many of us are members of an unofficial Cult that worships Powell’s Books, in Portland, Oregon. Powell’s is such a major bookstore that their main store occupies a whole city block, they have a website advertised across the US in the *Utne Reader*, and they may have pioneered the combination of a book and magazine store with a café. Also they issue business cards for their store cat, Fup.

Powell’s also sends out a frequent regular email newsletter, PowellsBooks.news.

To subscribe to PowellsBooks.news, go to https://www.powells.com/news/cgi-bin/list_manager

Make comments, suggestions, requests to newsletter@powells.com.

AS THE WIZARDS OF THE COAST TURN:

John Bartley, Our Man in Portland, sent a URL for a very frank online news story to the SF Northwest listserv last month, titled “we were going to build a planet where geeks evolved from humans”. The history of how Wizards of the Coast began, and how it grew, is “Probably old news to many, but entertaining, nonetheless,” he commented drily.

After reading the story myself, I wanted to write a blurb like: “SEE the punk Goth gaming culture in action! SEE a business run like an anarcho-syndicalist commune! SEE co-workers compete to sleep with more co-workers than other co-workers do!”, only I’m not sure if someone is just pulling my leg.

If you’d like to check this story out yourself, go to

<http://www.salon.com/tech/feature/2001/03/23/wizards/print.html> and http://www.salon.com/tech/feature/2001/03/26/wizards_part2/print.html

John Bartley III, <johnbartley@email.com>, Thu, 03 Jan 2002

National

CON-VERSION XIX/CANVENTION 22

“2002 is here and it’s time to think AURORAs [Canadian SF & Fantasy Awards]. The 2002 Eligibility lists should be available in February 2002. Watch upcoming *MiC Newsletters* for all your Aurora Award news and info. The 2002 Convention will be held at Con-Version XIX, August 9-11 at The Metropolitan Centre/ Westin Hotel, Calgary, Alberta.”

Made in Canada newsletter 21 Jan 6/02

[Garth adds: see also the Aurora Awards website, <http://www.sentex.net/~dmullin/aurora/>, and watch for news from this year’s Canadian Unity Fan Fund administrator, Murray Moore - GS.]

A member of the committee reminds us: “Con-Version, Calgary’s longest-running science fiction, fantasy and horror convention, leans heavily toward the literary side of fantastic fiction, with our annual Guest of Honor a top-name in the science fiction, fantasy or horror writing field. Previous guests have included Ben Bova, Kim Stanley Robinson, Connie Willis, CJ Cherryh and Mike Resnick, and Canadian authors Dave Duncan and Spider Robinson. This year we’re pleased to welcome George RR Martin as our Guest of Honour, award-winning Canadian SF authors Robert J. Sawyer as our Toastmaster, and James Alan Gardner as Canadian Author Guest. Our science fiction guest is Geoffrey A. Landis, a science fiction author, professor and part of the Mars Pathfinder development team.”

Robyn Herrington, Jan. 2002

CON-VERSION XIX WRITERS’ CONTEST

Robyn Herrington also e-mailed: “... Our writing panels encourage new writers by introducing them to editors, publishers and professionals in the field, giving them valuable opportunities to learn from and network with the people best able to help further their writing careers. Con-Version also hosts an annual short story contest. Many of the entries come from Western Canadian writers, and this contest has been a stepping stone for Canadian writers of the fantastic to see their name in print. Go to <http://www.con-version.org/story.html> for all the details. We pay pro rates for the winning

stories, and this year's judges are Robert J. Sawyer, Anne Marston and Rebecca Bradley.

"All stories entered will be given a professional line-by-line critique and edit by a local professional in the speculative fiction writing field. Winners will also receive a certificate indicating their placement in the final judging, as well as publication in the Con-Version program book or a separate booklet. This year's judges are Rebecca Bradley, published Horror novelist, Ann Marston, AVON/EOS author of Celtic fantasies, and Robert J. Sawyer."

*Robyn Herrington, rmherrin@ucalgary.ca,
Jan. 2002*

Recently Released Books by Canadians

Appleseed by John Clute
Memories of Ice by Steven Erickson
Skin Folk by Nalo Hopkinson
Seven Wild Sisters by Charles de Lint
Tales from the Wonder Zone: Stardust edited by Julie E. Czerneda
Maelstrom by Peter Watts
Ascending by James Alan Gardner
A Paradigm of Earth by Candace Jane Dorsey
The Onion Girl by Charles de Lint
Silvercloak by Dave Duncan
St. Patrick's Bed by Terrence M. Green
The Golden Sword by Fiona Patton
House of Pain by Sephera Giron
The Chronoliths by Robert Charles Wilson
The Free Lunch by Spider Robinson
Running on Instinct by N. M. Luiken
In The Company of Others by Julie E. Czerneda
The Wolves of Woden by Alison Baird
Sea of Sorrows by Michelle West
Dance of Knives by Donna McMahon
Unseen Masters by Bruce Ballon
Cold Comfort by Nancy Kilpatrick
Teeth by Edo van Belkom
Six Inch Spikes by Edo van Belkom
Made in Canada newsletter 21 Jan 6/02

Upcoming Book Releases by Canadians

Tales from the Wonder Zone edited by Julie E. Czerneda
 o Explorer (February 2002)
 o Orbiter (March 2002)
The Peshawar Lancers by S.M. Stirling (Jan 2002)
The Black Chalice by Marie Jakober (U.S. - Feb 2002)
The Better Part of Valor by Tanya Huff, (March 2002)

A Dragon's Ascension by Ed Greenwood (Mar 2002)
The Isle of Battle by Sean Russell, (U.K - March 2002 : U.S - Aug 2002)
Warchild by Karin Lowachee, (Apr 2002)
Orbis by Scott MacKay (Apr 2002)
Mindworlds by Phyllis Gotlieb (May 2002)
Permanence by Karl Schroeder (May 2002)
Hominids by Robert J. Sawyer (June 2002)
Dorsai Spirit by Gordon R. Dickson (June 2002)
To Trade the Stars by Julie E. Czerneda (June 2002)
Approximately Infinite: The Essential A.E. van Vogt by A.E. van Vogt (June 2002)
Green Music by Ursula Pflug (?)
Angel of Darkness by Charles de Lint (Aug 2002)
Down and Out in the Magic Kingdom by Cory Doctorow (2002)
Earthbound by John Clute (Dec 2002)

Sources: Locus Online - *Locus Magazine*
 - Tor website
Made in Canada newsletter 21 Jan 6/02

"On Friday, January 25, 2002, Bakka: The Science Fiction Bookstore [hosted] a launch party for Rob Sawyer's latest book, the hardcover short-story collection *Iterations*, published by Quarry Press. ... Bakka is at 598 Yonge Street [Toronto], one-half block north of Wellesley subway station, on the west side of Yonge."
 (source: Rob Sawyer)

Made in Canada newsletter 21 Jan 6/02

JULIE CZERNEDA MAKES PHILIP K. DICK AWARD FINALS

"A great Canadian SF Author (and my very good friend!), Julie E. Czerneda, is a finalist for the 2001 Philip K. Dick Award. The press release follows:

"The judges of the 2001 Philip K. Dick Award and the Philadelphia SF Society are pleased to announce six nominated works that comprise the final ballot for the award:

SHIP OF FOOLS by Richard Paul Russo (Ace Books)
COMPASS REACH by Mark W. Tiedemann (Meisha Merlin)
DIVINE INTERVENTION by Ken Wharton (Ace Books)
IN THE COMPANY OF OTHERS by Julie E. Czerneda (DAW Books)
THE GHOST SISTER by Liz Williams (Bantam Spectra)

MEET ME IN THE MOON ROOM by Ray Vukcevich (Small Beer Press)

“First prize and any special citations will be announced on March 30, 2002 at Norwescon 25 at the Doubletree Seattle Airport Hotel, SeaTac, Washington.

“The Philip K. Dick Award is presented annually for distinguished science fiction published in paperback original form in the United States. The award is sponsored by the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society and the award ceremony is sponsored by the NorthWest Science Fiction Society. Last year’s winner was *ONLY FORWARD* by Michael Marshall Smith (Bantam) with a special citation to *EVOLUTION’S DARLING* by Scott Westerfeld (Four Walls Eight Windows). The 2001 judges were Constance Ash, Greg Beatty (chair), Jan Lars Jensen, Louise Marley, and Scott Westerfeld.”

Don Bassie, 9 Jan. 2002

CH-CH-CH-CHANGES

Don Bassie, Our Man in Ontario, writes: “Made in Canada [*his website*] is still going through an overhaul. I will be moving the website to a new address and will be updating ALL ENTRIES! (don’t worry, MiC will have no downtime other than what Geocities is already imposing) I won’t be adding any new entries until the overhaul is done. If you already have a listing in MiC, please forward any updates/info you would like me to add to canadian_sf@hotmail.com. Those of you with MiC entries who do not have your own website feel free to contact me regarding using your entry as your official site.”

Made in Canada newsletter 21 Jan 6/02

Made in Canada (www.geocities.com/canadian_sf) is eligible for a special Hugo Award for Best Website (http://www.conjose.org/wsfs/wsfs_web.html) to be presented at ConJosé in 2002. Members of last years PhilCon and this years ConJosé are eligible to nominate. For those who want to vote for the Hugo Awards but cannot attend the con, supporting memberships are available for \$55 Canadian or \$35 U.S at <http://www.conjose.org/Member/signup.html>. Nomination forms are now available in .pdf format at <http://www.conjose.org/wsfs/content/HugoNomBallot.pdf>. Nomination forms are due March 31st, 2002.

Here’s the pertinent links....

Made in Canada - www.geocities.com/canadian_sf

MiC Newsletter - www.geocities.com/canadian_sf/Newsletters

The ConJosé Hugo Voting page is at http://www.conjose.org/wsfs/wsfs_hugo.html.

The nomination forms (.pdf document) are at <http://www.conjose.org/wsfs/content/HugoNomBallot.pdf>.

The ConJosé Membership page is at <http://www.conjose.org/Member/membership.html>.

To purchase a membership, go to <http://www.conjose.org/Member/signup.html>.

Thanks in advance,

Don Bassie, Jan. 12, 2002

International

GARTH GOT ANSIBLE STUFF WRONG

David Langford writes: “Thanks for the *Ansible* plug, but your *Ansible* e-mail subscription information is all wrong. Compare the following lines from every e-mailed and posted issue:

> *To receive _Ansible_ monthly via e-mail, send a message to ...*
 > *Majordomo@jmi.gla.ac.uk*
 > *... containing the sole text:*
 > *subscribe ansible*
 > *(Subject line irrelevant.) Please send a corresponding ‘unsubscribe*
 > *ansible’ to resign from this list if you weary of it or plan to change*
 > *e-addresses.*
 > *[NET NOTE. Please see the last section for subscribe/unsubscribe*
 > *information: such requests should NOT be sent to my personal e-mail*
 > *address. DRL]”*

Dave Langford, Jan. 5, 2002

FAMOUS IN FINLAND

“The current issue of the Finnish SF&F mag, *Tähtivaeltaja*, is a special ‘Kanada’ issue, with an article on David Cronenberg, interviews with Peter Watts and Douglas Smith and a translated story by Douglas Smith (can you read Finnish?).” (source Douglas Smith)

Made in Canada newsletter 21 Jan 6/02

FROM THE EDGE OF FOREVER

“Native American SF author Russell Bates, who sold to *The Last Dangerous Visions* at age 29 in 1970, and again in 1972, marked his 60th

birthday last year by withdrawing both stories for publication elsewhere. All this will be chronicled in a science fiction short story, 'The Lurker In The House At The Center Of Infinity', to be published in 2002, wherein a writer/editor, "Elias Halloran", is using a John Storer-like ethereal web to draw on the creative juices and talents of all who were lulled into contributing to a volume that never is published, and the house in question is so microscopically arranged and calculated to be the drawing rune. Unscramble "Elias Halloran" and you cannot make anyone else's known and existing name from it."

Ansible 174, Jan, 2002

[Garth adds: any BCSFAn who doesn't have to have the foregoing story explained to him, or her, will get a free Neat Thing from my boxes of fannish memorabilia and impedimenta.- GS]

RESPECT AT LAST: "The *Oxford English Dictionary* asks learned sf fans to help with citations of sf/fan terms whose earliest printed appearance is uncertain. See http://66.108.177.107/SF/sf_citations.shtml."

Ansible 174, Jan, 2002

OH IT'S TOO WEIRD AND WONDERFUL

The e-magazine *THIS IS TRUE* is like "Curious Times" or "News of the Terribly Odd", the sort of news that isn't quite heartwarming human interest, and isn't quite the disasters-and-sensations that newspapers use to fill the space between ads, but the sort of news that made Mark Twain wonder if our planet is the Galaxy's insane asylum. Samples:

"WHERE THERE'S SMOKE: Police in Brechin, Ont., Canada, made a huge haul of marijuana, netting 20,000 plants – 50 truckloads. Deciding it was too much to burn, they buried it at a landfill. Big mistake. 'The first night, there were 35 guys out there,' said a head shop owner. Once word spread, 'there were whole rows of guys with shovels digging it up all night and hauling it away in trucks.' Police finally wised up and started arresting people at the dump, charging them with possession of marijuana and possession of stolen property. (*Toronto Star*) ...One man's trash is another's treasure."

THIS is TRUE, 28 October 2001

"BLOCKHEAD: The City Council in

Southampton, England, was going to chop down a 60-year-old tree until local residents protested. After the Council decided to save the tree, it announced the decision by writing a letter. To the tree. Posted to the tree's trunk, it started 'Dear The Tree,' and explained the tree has been issued a temporary preservation order. A Council spokesman said the letter was a 'standard legalistic device' and that 'addressing the letter "Dear The Tree" ensures that a preservation order covers it.' The letter advised the tree that any further comments or suggestions regarding its fate must be made in writing. (*London Mirror*) ...Next step, a solicitor will be assigned to give it fair representation."

THIS is TRUE, 28 October 2001

"LOOK AT THE BRIGHT SIDE: The September 11 terrorist attacks present an 'opportunity' for churches to evangelize, says the Rev. Jerry Falwell. Addressing the Florida Baptist Pastors' Conference in Lakeland, Fla., he urged churches to 'strike while the iron is hot. Whatever we can do to reach people that doesn't violate scripture, we do it.' Falwell also said that even Osama bin Laden could be saved, if only he converted to Christianity. 'I had a student ask me, 'Could the savior you believe in save Osama bin Laden?' Of course, we know the blood of Jesus Christ can save him,' he told the group. And then what? 'And then he must be executed.' (*Lakeland Ledger*) ...Perhaps by holding his head under water when you baptize him, Jerry."

THIS is TRUE, 18 November 2001

A full year of expanded stories (and discounts on *TRUE* books) is just \$15. For details, send a blank e-mail to Upgrade@thisistrue.com or see <http://thisistrue.com/upgrade.html> SUBSCRIPTIONS to "This is True" are FREE. Just send a blank message to join-this-is-true@lyris.net or see our web site. Published weekly by Freelance Communications, PO Box 17326, Boulder CO 80308 USA since 1994 (ISSN 1521-1932). *TRUE* is available to newspapers as a regular feature column. "This is True" is a registered trademark.

CRANK THEORIES

by Garth Spencer

part VI in a continuing series

Mysterious Powers

I've always been interested in real magic, as opposed to stage magic. Under this heading we might as well lump in parapsychology, ESP, spoonbending, psychic healing, pyramid power, voodoo, Santeria, crystal energy and dowsing.

If magic were logically examined, you might define it as a set of *reputed* phenomena affecting probability, health, or physical objects at any distance, based mainly on a human's visualization and force of will. Under the name of "ESP" or "paranormal" faculties, claims for magic sound like the effects of a field force that doesn't behave much like the known physical forces, because it ignores cube-square laws of distance and time. Sounds like a crank theory, doesn't it?

(Of course, if there *were* some such field force, and if any critters with a complex nervous system could respond to it, or modulate it ... some critters would surely evolve to take advantage of it; just as many animals evolved senses of smell, sight, and hearing, and even electrostatic and thermosensing organs; just as most animals have pheromones, muscles, and sound organs. Some animals even have emergency lights.)

Alternatively, you might define classical folk magic as any half-baked theory about natural phenomena that *neither* explains anything adequately, nor helps anyone to control a malady or solve a practical problem. It struck me very early on that carrying a rabbit's foot, crossing the street to avoid a black cat, or other superstitions serve the same purpose as folk magic. *We kid ourselves into feeling we have some control over random, uncontrollable, and frankly unknown circumstances.* Sounds like a crank theory, doesn't it?

I actually read at some depth on the subject in the mid-1970s. I was a lot more skeptical coming out of this period than I was going in; the only thing I learned for sure is that you have to *make yourself believe* a whole lot, in order to carry on an interest in the occult. I guess, in that respect, it's a lot like belonging to a cult ... or like holding a military office.

Neopaganism and Modern Witchcraft

At the risk of alienating some of my friends and readers, logically I have to include

neopaganism and modern witchcraft among crank theories.

The story that neopagans and modern witches tell seems to go like this: "Until perhaps 7,000 to 9,000 years ago, people in many parts of Europe, Asia and Africa practiced peaceful, life-affirming forms of nature worship, often involving an Earth or Moon Goddess. Then, over a period of several thousands of years, aggressive, arrogant, patriarchal peoples repeatedly invaded many parts of these continents, and usually outlawed and demonized the peace-loving goddess-worshippers. During the Christian era, the witch-cults of Western Europe survived underground, to re-emerge only when tolerant civil societies were established." Oh, yes, and they say they practice magic.

I reserve opinion. To be honest about it, so do a good many neopagans these days. A little reading on the subject turns up much the same story, from various sources, entirely within the 20th century: a man named Gerald Gardner appeared in Britain in the 1950s and promoted a new, alternative, nature-worship which he called witchcraft; and he claimed to have uncovered an ancient, pre-Christian tradition, surviving covertly in British pagan families. This, apparently, appealed to some people. That appeal requires some explanation.

At some point it has to be admitted that, in effect, conventional Christianity appeared to invent its own sins, including institutional self-righteousness. This, among other things, has alienated a good many people in allegedly Christian countries from any form of Christianity. (And perhaps this is a twice-told tale to you; but I haven't seen it spelled out in print before.) It is not too hard to see why some people would seek a more life-affirming religion. Also they say they practice magic, which may be a more emotionally satisfying way of dealing with life's problems than worship and prayer alone.

It is entirely possible that there *were* survivals of pre-Christian religion in many parts of Europe, and in the form of folk magic or family traditions. I couldn't prove otherwise. But it appears to me much more likely that modern witchcraft started as a local cult, originating with Gerald Gardner.

A matter of even greater interest is how and why modern witchcraft became a relatively accepted part of the contemporary religious landscape. One of my acquaintances attributes contemporary tolerance of modern paganism in B.C. to one man, Samuel Wagar. I first heard of

Sam Wagar when he was connected to science fiction fandom in Toronto. Later, he appeared in British Columbia, and ran for a candidate in a local byelection; he lost the election after being cornered into admitting he was a pagan.

But the effect of the press that ensued was to establish, to some people at least, that the set of all pagans is *not* equal and identical to the set of all Satanists. (Perhaps people in Abbotsford still reserve opinion about that. ☺)

If enough people took any form of magic seriously, we might expect to see it licensed and regulated. I await the foundation of a B.C. Magicians' and Witches' Association, with a set of standard examinations. One Rachel Pollack has already written novels about a recognizable modern, urban society – *with* such an authority, licensing professional magic practitioners.

Fortunetelling and Prophecy

Every kind of animal, vegetable, mineral, astronomical and party-game objects have been used for some kind of divination. The key elements seems to be *a) arbitrary meanings given to arbitrary symbols, b) some pattern in which the symbols can be interpreted, c) some random element of chance for throwing the symbols into the pattern.*

You may recognize these elements from I Ching and Tarot card readings and rune casting, but what about astrology? Most of us come across astrology as if the signs of the planets were just now thrown randomly across the skies, and therefore across the houses of the zodiac. In physical fact, of course, the planets orbit in predictable paths. The first known civilizations charted the positions of stars and planets over time and learned to predict them by rule of thumb, even if the mathematical principles to calculate orbits were not discovered until three centuries ago.

If the values assigned to planets and houses and aspects were more concrete and definite ... still, one grave drawback to astrology is that astrological almanacs, until at least the 19th century, were *over two millennia out of date*. The precession of the equinoxes means that the point on the zodiac where the Sun rises, at the vernal equinox, “creeps” from one house to the next over the course of centuries. As it is, the meanings and interpretations given to astrology are highly subjective.

Do you get the impression that the symbolic system in any form of fortunetelling is just an

excuse, a diversion to skin a mark? Or do you prefer to believe that it facilitates some nonrational faculties?

Predicting Doomsday, Identifying the Antichrist, and Otherwise Decoding Revelations

Given that foretelling the future is almost explicitly *forbidden* in the Judeo-Christian tradition, it seems sort of contradictory that about half the books of the Old Testament are named after prophets. Upon reflection, though, it appears the prophets were less like fortunetellers and more like Pat Robertson or Jimmy Swaggart, without the power of television. “Change what you’re doing or Suffer the Wrath ...” You have to wonder how they qualified to be prophets, or how they were publicly recognized as such.

Generations of alleged Christians have also spent (or wasted) *man-centuries* trying to interpret the Book of Revelations, including Isaac Newton among other cranks. A significant subculture still believes this is a coded roadmap into the future, or the end of the future. But Revelations has been described as an un-Christian, in fact anti-Christian book, and there was a good deal of argument about including it in the New Testament at all.

Yet somehow we have arrived at a day when hundreds, if not thousands of cranks - survivalists, unofficial militias, and other American fundamentalists - think they are living in the Last Days, and think they know who the Antichrist is (i.e., the U.S. government or a cabal controlling it). If that weren’t bad enough, writers are successfully publishing novels describing a near future with an Evil Sinister World Government affixing the Mark of the Beast on everyone. I’m not just talking about Hal Lindsey; a whole novel series on this theme appeared on the recent book release shelves at the Granville Book Company, until recently.

I have been informed that in the first century A.D., and for some centuries before and after, similar apocryphal books were circulating in the Mediterranean world, enjoying a popularity rather similar to science fiction today ... but the colourful symbolism disguised *political* tracts, usually anti-Roman in sentiment. Robert Graves made an argument that the Book of Revelations in fact equated the Antichrist with the Caesar Nero.

If Revelations is an ancient seditious political pamphlet, rather than a book of religious prophecy, it would explain why so many different people have been identified as the Antichrist, and why *nobody's* predicted Doomsday came to pass.

Is Economics a Field of Crank Theories?

The longer you study crank theories, the more tempted you will be to start your own. I'm working on a theory that the discipline of eco-

nomics is, frankly, a form of fortunetelling; that economic theories *themselves* are crank theories, because they all depend on one or more axioms that really amount to unsupported religious beliefs. That you might just as well guide your investment decisions by astrology; plenty of major businesses do.

Do you think my theory explains some 20th-century history? Or should I lie down and be quiet for a while?

to be continued

Who Knows the Following?

You may or may not have some of the following information that I'm looking for;

- contact information for some missing past BCSFA members -

Alan Barclay, Iona Birch, Clayton Hamacher, John Herbert, Mike Jackson, E Kovac, Mike Lesiak, Michael Martin, Merina Matthew, Michael R. Otter, Richard Scheib, Tim Smick, Robert Vaughn

- addresses or email for the following interview subjects of the Orion Consulate -

Chris Barsan, Betty Bigelow, R Lynne Birch, Sandra Birch, Elaine Brown, Jim Buchanan, Scott Newhouse, Jim Stewart

- the text of my serialized article on conspiracy theories, which *BCSFazine* started publishing under John Wong's editorship. Remember that?

For future issues of *BCSFazine*, I'm working on articles about languages in science fiction, about the new and improved Royal Swiss Navy, and about the renowned *Kingdom of Talossa*. R. Graeme Cameron has submitted an article on Nils Helmer Frome, who may have been the first, and loneliest member of Canadian fandom. If **YOU** have interesting articles about the comics industry, game design, costume construction or mixing cement on Mars, why not write NOW to *BCSFazine*? You'll be glad you did!

I forgot something again, didn't I?