



## B.C. Science Fiction Association's Monthly Newsletter

#391

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December 2005



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## MASTHEAD

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Our email list URL: [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc\\_scifi\\_assc/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc_scifi_assc/)

### *BCSFA's events this month*

<b><i>BCSFAzine</i> deadline:</b>	Fri. Dec. 9th at FRED
<b>Book discussion:</b>	Thu. Dec. 15, 7 p.m., at Our Town Café, 245 East Broadway, Vancouver; book for discussion will be <i>The Wreck of The River of Stars</i> , by Michael Flynn
<b><i>BCSFAzine</i> production:</b>	Fri. Dec. 21st - early distribution at FRED

## ERRATA:

The URL I gave in the masthead last issue is for the new BCSFA email list that Alyx Shaw set up, *not* for a new BCSFA website.

## THE FANTHROPOPHAGI, AND FEN WHOSE HEADS DO GROW BENEATH THEIR SHOULDERS

Starting this issue I would like to challenge readers to look outside their usual channels of science fiction, and I don't mean TV channels. Some Sfnal or fantasy-flavoured movies are coming up this month at Pacific Cinematheque, which is famous mainly for foreign and art films.

\*\*\*

October was a pretty stressful month for many of us in local, indeed regional fandom. Granted, we still pulled off a reasonably enjoyable convention. But it entails stress.

On the more serious end of things, Fran Skene had a medical scare just before VCon, fortunately over now; and Justin Brown, husband of Orycon organizer Helen Umberger, endured a plane crash. He is now in physiotherapy.

Less seriously, we had a number of pointless flame wars in local fandom, instigated by me or by "Aristotle Jones". Looking back, it seems we BCSFAns merely don't understand each other's writing sometimes, or mistake simple mistakes, accidents, and technical glitches for deliberate acts.

In some years, I think we mistake the level of stress of running even a small convention.

This isn't just an issue for BCSFA. Based upon the online exchanges I witnessed in late October, Orycon organizers seemed to be forced to rethink or rediscover a lot of their setup and procedure this year; they had more than their share of problems while moving to a new hotel, ranging from lost email to unfair rumours to PayPal and room reservation glitches. Chaos happens. Granted, they pulled off a rather successful convention despite all.

How do you tackle issues like this?

\*\*\*

Personally, I solve problems largely by cutting things down to what I can handle, things that hold still; this is why I will do things in words and on paper, but not with people, if I can avoid it. Until recently I believed I could offer a service purely by *preparing documents*, on club events and

Canadian fandom and Aurora awards and even observing how conventions seem to be run.

Now, I'm beginning to wonder if I had a plan for success, or a design for failure.

Graeme Cameron observed, after one of the recent tempests in a teapot, that 99% of people misinterpret 99% of the verbal information they get. Well, that pretty much invalidates my whole design for living. I have to re-evaluate this.

How much re-evaluating are *you* doing? How much are you up for?

## GREAT ARGUMENT ABOUT IT AND ABOUT

---

*Lynda Williams, Oct. 31, 2005*

Thanks Garth. I have news! Just finished the first draft of *Righteous Anger*, the second book in the Okal Rel Universe series from Edge [Publishing]. Now it's only, well, about a year of editing and tinkering to seeing it in print. Instant gratification, publishing ain't. :-) Oh well. It is still wonderful.

Enjoyed hearing that Bobbie [Dufault] is running the ConCom Con ... did I get that right?

*((Yes, you did.*

*((Lynda Williams is a published SF writer, a new BCSFAzine subscriber, and a member of the Northern Speculations writers' group in Prince George.))*

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**Jane Bond and Conan the Bounty-Hunter Versus the Terrorist Were-Voles:** Warning: meetup.com was free but now charges the group moderator a fee.

**Letters of Comment - Lloyd Penney:** As it turns out, Charles Rocket actually killed himself, Friday 7 October 2005.

**Birthdays:** Happy birthday to Amy Hearn! I'm sorry I haven't been in touch since VCON 30. Feel free to e-mail me if you read this.

**On Canadian Fandom:** Read and found interesting; no comment yet.

---

*Lloyd&Yvonne Penney <penneys@allstream.net>, 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON, M9C 2B2, November 19, 2005*

After running a con suite in Rochester, NY, a week of long evenings at the *Globe and Mail*, and a 3-day daytime assignment elsewhere in Toronto, I've fallen way behind on just about everything. I see it's about deadline time, so here's a loc on *BCSFazine* 390.

Just for the record, and to put it print... Toronto fandom misses Martin Hunger and Christina Carr. When I moved from Ontario to Victoria in 1977, I enjoyed many new opportunities, a real fresh start, and finally finding fandom. I don't think they've had the same luck I have, but it sure hasn't been through lack of trying. I hope the RenFaire they want to start up works.

My loc... I think those who criticize SF zines and those who dabble in that terrible SF stuff, especially those in alt.zines and alt.ezines, are just trying to look uber-cool in each other's eyes. I dismiss them as they would me. Still, I subscribe to these two Usenet areas just to see what comes across. Re the newsletter... after the veiled hostility that came from my announcement of a planned national newsletter, I put out a trial balloon for a local newsletter, and that has received near-unanimous apathy. You're right, Garth, I identify more with fanzine fandom; and my background in journalism, and experiences with fandom, tell me that communication and news gathering help educate and inform fandom, unify it, and help create friendships and networks. That's why I'd like to do a newsletter; but why preach to an empty church? I am still evaluating any kind of fannish publication I'd like to work on... or perhaps I'll just stick with letters of comment. There's still time to make a decision. If nothing else, I am glad that there has been discussion over the idea of a national newsletter. I might also have to take into account the fact that full-time work is out of my reach for the short-term, and I may have to spend more time just making a living. Reality rears its ugly head once more.

*((I got drunk and obnoxious at a recent VCon meeting/party, mainly because I have a similar experience in local fandom to the experience you have been having. It only means that they don't offer what I want, and I don't offer what they want. In a perfect world you and I would find the gang that shares our interests; this isn't happening.*

*((What I haven't admitted until now is that I haven't met the standards at cons like Potlatch, either, and I don't know why.))*

I think the current reality of fandom is that, as the years and decades go by, fannish interests, as indeed the interests of any particular sub-cultural group, will diversify and multiply, and grow apart. Witness fanzines, filking, furies, and any other fannish group with little exposure to the rest of fandom. My impetus to do something like a newsletter is to try to connect up these groups; something Yvonne and I have tried to do in Toronto fandom ever since we got married, I suppose. We found friends in all these areas, we helped them with their conventions, and we made them aware of each other. I think this has eased the Balkanization we found in Toronto fandom when we entered it, but it certainly has not solved it. One area of success for us was the Torcon committee, where people from all areas of local fandom came together to publicize and operate a successful Worldcon bid. An area of failure is the lack of communications between the conventions in town. That's why Ad Astra and FilKONtario will be on the same weekend in 2006. What I may do is an occasional, information newsletter, and print up whatever stuff I can find. I'll add the local population, plus selected out-of-town fans, to the e-mailing list, and try to do something of value. Available time will dictate what I do; usually does.

*((Which is why I made up that collection of Canadian fan news, for your benefit, and for the benefit of everyone else on my email list. Thought I would lend a hand.*

*((Trying to relieve the mutual ignorance of Canadian fan groups was my motivation, too, back when I edited The Maple Leaf Rag, back in the mid-1980s. I cannot say that I succeeded.))*

I urge all BCSFA members to nominate and vote for the Aurora Awards. The maximum number of nominators and voters will ensure that fandom as a whole chooses the winners of the awards, and not just one or two groups who participate fully. Let's all participate that way, and those who win will truly be indicative of the best Canadian fandom and prodrom have to offer. (Just for the record... you might notice that the convention is calling itself TT20 and not Toronto Trek 20. For some years, the idea of changing its name to reflect the fact that Trek is becoming a minor part of the con has been tossed about and discussed. I think it's starting to happen.)

*((If BCSFAns even notice that I try to give them news about the Aurora Awards, they still probably don't know why they should give a damn, what stake they have in the awards, or what the hell TT20 is. The difference between the participation the award needs and the participation it gets puts me in mind of the civic elections we just had in Vancouver.))*

It is easy to become a little depressed about fandom, and why it can't be today like it was back when (a function of getting older at the velocity of 1 sec/sec); but it is heartening to see someone new like Kalelin Kirk attend V-Con 30, enjoy him/herself, get so much out of it, and then write about it. Perhaps there is a future for the fannish activities I remember and enjoyed. Kalelin, you've got it right, a con is for getting together with friends, making some new ones, and talking about everything under the sun. Even better if you get to talk about fandom and science fiction, but it's not necessary.

*((I had threatened to publish my negative screed about VCon instead, but I realize what people are prepared to read.*

*((Something changed about two weeks after VCon; I got an attitude adjustment, I guess. I just stopped agonizing about not measuring up to something people expect – family, the job market, or fannish fans – and about not getting what I need out of life, or Vancouver, or local fans. I'm happier alone anyway.))*

I agree with you, Garth, on comments about a con suite. As said at the beginning of this letter, Yvonne and I ran, this past weekend, the con suite for Astronomicon 9, the irregularly annual SF con held in Rochester, New York. We didn't do the shopping for the suite, which meant we had to serve up what we were given in some logical fashion. We provided lots of healthy foods, like veggie trays, and fresh apples, and lots of nut and raisin snack mixes. We had lots of soda, honey lager on the Saturday night, and sugary cereals in the morning for breakfast. Not once did we say we were serving meals; a con suite is not a restaurant. (Neither was the place in the hotel, but we won't go there.) A con suite is a place to have a snack, recharge yourself for a busy weekend, have a place to rest and regroup, and enjoy some of the special hospitality the convention lays out. I know some cons in the past offered whole meals; I am not sure that's possible now.

Other aspects of the con...when Astronomicon chairman Wayne Brown asked us if we'd do the con suite for him, we said sure, given the guest list, which included Spider Robinson. During the con, Spider came up to the con suite for his traditional Beatles sing-along, and one of the topics of discussion between songs was our first cons. He asked if anyone remembered what he had termed Nonexistacon, Erincon 3 in Mississauga, and had anyone here actually attended it? To his surprise, two hands went up...mine and Mike Glicksohn's. We talked about the con, I even reminded him of the chairman's name, and the Beatles were almost lost in the discussion. I remembered the great Beatles jam in the VCon 25 con

suite, and the one in Rochester was just the same; some good memories there.

*We Also Heard From: Greg Slade, Alyx Shaw, R. Graeme Cameron*



“Can't stop the print run”

## ANNIVERSAIRES

(members' birthdays)

- Dec. 8: Mohammed Witherspoon-Li
- Dec. 11: Kay Briggs
- Dec. 16/18?: Steve Forty
- Dec. 17: Allan Kelly
- Dec. 17: Debbie Miyashita
- Dec. 18: Fran Skene
- Dec. 20: Barb Dryer
- Dec. 20: Colleen Harris
- Dec. 21: Stan Evans
- Dec. 22: Jonathan Rose



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Are you an anime, comic,  
fantasy, gaming, horror, or  
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Restaurant, 110 West 14th Street  
(facing the Civic Plaza  
West of Lonsdale),  
North Vancouver



## KARASS, WAMPETERS, FOMA, GRANFALLOONS

(events upcoming)

### Dec. 2005

Dec. 2: movie premiere of *Aeon Flux* (SF, Charlize Theron, Frances McDormand)

Dec. 2 at Pacific Cinematheque (7:30 p.m.): *Reconstruction* (what if your life forgot you?)

Dec. 2-4: **SMOFCon 23** (the original conrunner's con. This year's theme: "Expecting the Unexpected") at the Red Lion Convention Center Hotel in Portland, OR. Tel. 1-800-343-1822. Rooms \$69/nite; hotel # is 800-343-1822. Memberships \$70 at the door. Write P.O. Box 5703, Portland, OR 97228-5703; tel. (503) 283-0802. Email [smofconpdx@gmail.com](mailto:smofconpdx@gmail.com), URL: [www.osfci.org/smofcon/](http://www.osfci.org/smofcon/)

Dec. 3: **Baroness' Tourney** in the Barony of Lions Gate, Vancouver, BC.

Dec. 5 at Pacific Cinematheque (9:20 p.m.): *Don Quixote, Knight Errant*

Dec. 9: movie premiere of *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

Dec. 14: movie premiere of *King Kong* (Peter Jackson's next big movie)

Dec. 15, 7:15 p.m. / Dec. 16, 9:25 p.m. at Pacific Cinematheque: *Time of the Wolf* (a post-apocalypse family survival story WITHOUT SFX)

### January 2006

Jan. 13-15: **Rustycon 23** at the Radisson Hotel Seattle Airport, Seattle, WA. Guests: Mike Moscoe, Ruth Thompson, Clan Burnout/Carbon Based

Rentals. Theme: Living the Sci-Fi/Fantasy Life. Reservations: Radisson Hotel Seattle Airport, 17001 International Blvd., Seattle, WA 98188, (206) 244-6000, rooms \$89/nite. Memberships: \$50 at the door. For more information, write Rustycon, POBox 27075, Seattle, WA 98165-1475, email [rustycon@rustycon.com](mailto:rustycon@rustycon.com), or see [www.rustycon.com](http://www.rustycon.com)

Jan. 14: “**The January Feeding Frenzy** will be taking place on Saturday January 14 2006 @ 7pm (which should be the second Saturday of the month). Venue has yet to be decided, but it's just one more thing that will probably be discussed at [the November 26<sup>th</sup>] BCSFA meeting.”

Doug Finnerty, Nov. 23, 2005

Jan. 28-29: **Last Guest Con** at the Radisson Hotel Seattle Airport, Seattle, WA. Package (room, membership, banquet): \$122 single, \$160 double. Reservations: Radisson Hotel Seattle Airport, 17001 International Blvd., Seattle, WA 98188, (206) 244-6000. Information: Last Guest Con, c/o SWOC, POBox 5181, Lacey, WA 98509-5181, (360) 456-7441, email [mcitrak@comcast.net](mailto:mcitrak@comcast.net), or see [www.lastguestcon.com](http://www.lastguestcon.com).

## February 2006

Feb. 3-5: **WicCon** at the Shilo Inn Suites Hotel Portland Airport, 11707 NE Airport Way, Portland, OR 97220-1075. Featured Guest: Silverstar Red Crow (Red Witch Tradition). Musical Guest: Heather Alexander. Rooms \$99 + tax for single or double occupancy, \$109/3, \$119/4; mention Wiccon when you phone (503) 252-7500. While this is not strictly fandom, its pagan focus is relevant to certain elements of fandom and it is also a northwest convention. Memberships \$35 to December 31/05, \$40 up to the door, payable to Magickal Winter Weekend, Box 8246, Portland, OR 97207-8246, or see [www.wiccon.org](http://www.wiccon.org)

Feb. 16-18 (Thurs-Sat): **Life, the Universe & Everything** at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. Writer GoHs: Kevin J. Anderson, Rebecca Moesta; poetry guest, Michael R. Collings; artist, Stephanie Pui-Mun Lau. Venue: 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Wilkinson Student Center, Brigham Young University. An academic symposium on all aspects of science fiction and fantasy: writing, media, worldbuilding (CYOW), art, anime. Academic papers. Art show, charity auction and more. You register at the door, but admission is free. See <http://ltue.org>

Feb. 17-19: **Radcon 4B** at the Red Lion Inn, Pasco, WA. Writer GoHs:

Jay Lake, Dean Wesley Smith & Kristine Kathryn Rusch; Artist GoH: Frank Wu, Science GoH: Dr. Thomas Hopp, Editor GoH: Anne Sowards, FanGoH: Dave Hirzel, Special GoH: Heather Alexander. Memberships: \$25 to Feb. 2, \$30 at the door. Write Radcon, PMB #162, 2527 W Kennewick Ave., Kennewick, WA 99336-3126, email [chair@radcon.org](mailto:chair@radcon.org), or see [www.radcon.org](http://www.radcon.org).

Feb. 24-26: **Potlatch 15** at the Best Western Executive Inn, Seattle, WA. Emphasis on writing. Reservations: write The Best Western Executive Inn, 200 Taylor Avenue North, Seattle, Washington 98109, Phone: 206-448-9444, Fax: 206-441-7929, Toll Free Reservations: 800-351-9444, <http://www.bwexec-inn.com/>, [info@bwexec-inn.com](mailto:info@bwexec-inn.com). All rooms are now non-smoking. Potlatch rates are: \$79.00/single or double occupancy; \$99.00/triple or quad plus tax. **do not use** Best Western's on-line reservation service or national "800 #" to make your hotel reservations. ... If you have questions about the hotels or need help with a travel-related problem, please email Suzanne Tompkins at [hotel@potlatch-sf.org](mailto:hotel@potlatch-sf.org).

Memberships: \$45/more at the door. Potlatch 15, c/o S. Tompkins, PO Box 25075, Seattle, WA 98165; or see <http://www.potlatch-sf.org/>.

## March 2006

**March 6, 2006 - Portland Comic Book Show - Portland, Oregon** (reportedly Oregon's largest Comic Book Convention. Held twice a year in Portland, Oregon)

March 17-19: **Anime Oasis V** at the Boise Airport Holiday Inn in Boise, ID. Room reservations \$69/nite via (208) 343-4900; mention Anime Oasis. Memberships: Adult 3-day, \$25 payable to Jeremy Lopett via PayPal, or before Feb. 11/06 to 3 Harvestview S., Apt. H, Mount Joy, PA 17522.

March 24-26: **Gamestorm 8** at the Red Lion at the Quay, Vancouver, WA. GoHs: TBA. Reservations: Red Lion at the Quay, 100 Columbia St., Vancouver, WA 98660; tel (360) 694-8341, rooms \$74 single/double. Memberships \$30 at the door. GameStorm, POBox 764, Portland, OR 97207, email [chair@gamestorm.org](mailto:chair@gamestorm.org), or see [www.gamestorm.org](http://www.gamestorm.org).

March 24-26: **Sakura-Con 9** at the Washington State Convention and Trade Center in Seattle, WA. Sakura-Con is the premier Pacific Northwest Anime Convention devoted to East Asian Culture, with a particular focus



on Japanese animation (anime), Japanese Comics (manga), and video gaming. Guests TBA. Memberships \$45 to Feb. 28, \$60 at the door. Sakura-Con, 3702 South Fife St., Suite K-2, PMB 78, Tacoma, WA 98409, tel 877-873-3317, email [chair@sakuracon.org](mailto:chair@sakuracon.org), or see [www.sakuracon.org](http://www.sakuracon.org).

March 31 – Apr. 2: **Ad Astra 2006** in Toronto, ON. Hotel TBA. Author GoH: Terry Brooks and Peter David. Editor GoH: Del Rey Books with Betsy Mitchell. Memberships \$60 to Feb. 28 and at the door. Ad Astra 2006, POBox 7276, Stn. A, Toronto, ON M5W 1X9, email [info@ad-astra.org](mailto:info@ad-astra.org), or see [www.ad-astra.org](http://www.ad-astra.org).

#### April 2006

April 1-2: **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Emerald City ComicCon** at the Qwest Field Exhibition Center in Seattle, WA. A comics-related convention which drew 6000 in April 2005. Multiple comic artist guests. Hotel is Springhill Suites Seattle by Marriott. Tickets through Ticketmaster, available in 2006. See [www.emeraldcitycomiccon.com](http://www.emeraldcitycomiccon.com).

April 13-16: **Norwescon 29** at the Doubletree Seattle Airport Hotel. Writer GoH: Lois McMaster Bujold, Artist GoH: Donato Giancola, TM: Robert J. Sawyer, Featured Publisher: DAW Books with Betsy Wollheim & Sheila Gilbert. Theme: “Journeys, Adventures and Quests of Fantastic Fiction.” Rooms: 18740 International Blvd., Seattle, WA 98188, (206) 246-8600, rooms \$102 quad occupancy. Memberships TBA. Norwescon 29, POBox 68547, Seattle, WA 98168-0547, (206) 270-7850, email [info@norwescon.org](mailto:info@norwescon.org), or see [www.norwescon.org](http://www.norwescon.org).

#### May 2006

May 5-7: **Corflu 23** in Toronto, ON. The original fanzine fans' convention. Memberships C\$60, US\$50, UK25. Cheques to Colin Hinz at 148 Howland Avenue, Toronto, ON CANADA M5R 3B5. Contacts: Colin Hinz, [asfi@eol.ca](mailto:asfi@eol.ca), (416) 516-8686; Catherine Crockett, [crockett@eol.ca](mailto:crockett@eol.ca), (416) 516-3571.

May 26-29: **Miscon 20** at Ruby's Inn & Convention Center in Missoula, MT. Writer GoH: Jerry Oltion, Artist GoH: Frank Wu, Special GoH: Dragon Dronet. Reservations: 4825 N. Reserve St., Missoula, MT 59808, (406) 541-7829, rooms \$72 single, \$82 double. Memberships: \$25 to April

31. Miscon, POBox 7721, Missoula, MT 59807, (406) 251-9463, email [chair@miscon.org](mailto:chair@miscon.org), or see [www.miscon.org](http://www.miscon.org).

#### June 2006

June 2-4: **ConComCon 13** at the Cascade Mountain Inn in Cle Elum, WA. The Northwest's conrunner's con. Focus for 2006: “sharing of information”. The organizers from the North American SF Convention aka Cascadia Con will share stuff. A CD and handouts will be provided. For rooms, write the Cascade Mountain Inn, 906 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St., Cle Elum, WA 98922, phone (509) 674-2380, or fax (509) 674-7099. (Room rates TBA.) Preregistration: \$25 to May 31, 2006, then \$35, to ConComCon [12?], POBox 1066, Seattle, WA 98111. Contact the Ccubed 13 chairman Bobbie DuFault at [Chairman@cascadiacon.org](mailto:Chairman@cascadiacon.org) or visit the Ccubed Website at [www.swoc.org/ccubed/](http://www.swoc.org/ccubed/).

#### July 2006

July 1-4: **Westercon 59/Conzilla** at the San Diego Marriott Mission Valley in San Diego, CA. GoH: Walter Jon Williams, Artist GoH: Bob Eggleton, FanGoH: Bobbi Armbruster, TM: Kevin J Anderson. Reservations: 8757 Rio San Diego Dr., San Diego, CA 92108, (619) 692-3800, rooms \$139 quad occupancy. Memberships: \$70 to June 15, \$80 at the door. Conzilla, POBox 845, Ramona, CA 92065, email [info@conzilla.info](mailto:info@conzilla.info), or see [www.conzilla.info](http://www.conzilla.info).

July 7-9: **TT20/Convention 26** at the DoubleTree International Plaza Hotel, Toronto, Ont. Guests include: Amber Benson, played Tara on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*; Michael Shanks, plays Dr. Daniel Jackson on *Stargate SG-1* (Sunday Only). MC Larry Stewart. New additions: LEXA DOIG (*Andromeda*, *Stargate SG1* and *The 4400*) and RICHARD HATCH (*Battlestar Galactica*, both versions). TT20 once again hosts the Prix Aurora Awards for contributions to Canadian SF and fandom. Rooms are at the DoubleTree International Plaza Hotel: 655 Dixon Road, Toronto, Ont. You can now call the DoubleTree International Plaza to book your hotel room at: 416-244-1711 or 800-222-8733. Don't forget to mention you are booking for Toronto Trek to get the convention rate of \$129. OR you can book online and use the conference code of TNO. Visit our web page at <http://www.tcon.ca> for links and information. Rates are only guaranteed until June 5, 2006 and while rooms are still available in our room block. Pre-Registration Fee: Adult full weekend, \$60; deadline is

May 26, 2006. Notes: All prices are subject to change. Enclose a cheque or money order payable to: Toronto Trek OR if you wish to pay by credit card: (You will be billed in CDN dollars) and send to: TT20 P.O. Box 7097, Station A Toronto, ON M5W 1X7 Contact: Information Line: (416) 410-TCON (8266) E-MAIL: [tt-info@tcon.ca](mailto:tt-info@tcon.ca) WEB: <http://www.tcon.ca>

### August 2006

Aug. 11-13: **Con-Version 22** in Calgary, AB (Hotel & rates TBA). GoHs: David Weber, Larry Niven. Canadian GoH: R. Scott Bakker. FanGoH: John Hertz. Memberships C\$40 to April 1. Write to Calgary SF & Fantasy Society, P.O. Box 20098, Calgary Place RPO, Calgary, AB T2P 4J2; more information at [www.con-version.org](http://www.con-version.org).

Aug 23-27: **Worldcon 64/LACon IV** at the Hilton Anaheim, Anaheim Marriott and Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, CA. Writer GoH: Connie Willis, Artist GoH: James Gurney, FanGoH: Howard Devore, Special Guest: Frankie Thomas. Reservations: (Hilton) 714-750-4321, (Marriott) 714-750-8000, rooms \$99 single/double. Memberships \$175 to July 1. LACon IV, c/o S.C.I.F.I. Inc., POBox 8442, Van Nuys, CA 91409; email [info@laconiv.org](mailto:info@laconiv.org), or see [www.laconiv.com](http://www.laconiv.com).

### September 2006

Sept. 22-24: **Foolsap VIII** at the Bellevue Sheraton in Bellevue, WA. GoH: C.J. Cherryh. A flat-paper-stuff convention, featuring artshow, dealers room, programming, a banquet at \$26 a head. Room rates TBA, about \$85/nite; contact Bellevue Sheraton, 100 112<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA 98004-5817; tel (425) 455-3330; fax (425) 451-2473. Memberships: \$45 to April 1<sup>st</sup>, \$50 to September 21, \$60 at the door to Foolsap, c/o Little Cat Z, POBox 2461, Seattle, WA 98111-2461, or via PayPal to [treasurer@foolscapcon.org](mailto:treasurer@foolscapcon.org); URL [www.foolscapcon.org](http://www.foolscapcon.org).

Sept. 22-24: **Rimcon Victoria**, "First Annual Science Fiction Convention". Guests: To be announced [Should be confirmed by Nov. 15/05]. To be held at the Holiday Inn, 3020 Blanshard Street, Victoria, BC, tel. (250) 382-4400. Discussion panels, Guest autographing sessions, Dealers Hall and Art Show and much more. MEMBERSHIP RATES: Adult Child\* (Must be accompanied by an adult); until Dec. 31/05, \$20.00 \$12.00; Jan 06 to May 06 \$25.00 \$15.00; Jun 06 to Sep 06 \$30.00 \$18.00; At Door – three days \$35.00 \$20.00; At Door – Day Passes \$20.00 \$12.00;

\*Children 5 years and under are free when accompanied by an Adult. "Supporting Membership" (?) \$ 9.00 (upgradeable to Attending at the rate at the time of upgrade); "Friend of RimCon" \$50.00. (Payment by Money Order payable to RimCon Victoria. All funds listed in Canadian dollars). For more information: go on-line at: [www.rimconvictoria.org](http://www.rimconvictoria.org), or inquire by mail to: Registration, RimCon Victoria, PO Box 32108, Victoria, BC V8P 4H0.

### November 2006

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



### ZINES RECEIVED

*Ansible* #220, Nov. 05 (online): David Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks. RG1 5AU, UK. Email [ansible@cix.co.uk](mailto:ansible@cix.co.uk)

*Burnaby Writers' Society newsletter* Nov/Dec. 05: c/o BWS, 6584 Deer Lake Ave., Burnaby, BC V5G 3T7; Email [info@bws.bc.ca](mailto:info@bws.bc.ca)

*De Profundis* #394, Nov 05 (paper): Marty Cantor ed., c/o LASFS, 11513 Burbank Blvd., N. Hollywood, CA 91601, U.S.A.

*File 770*:145, Oct. 2005, Mike Glyer, 705 Valley View Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016, U.S.A.; email [Mikeglyer@cs.com](mailto:Mikeglyer@cs.com). A newszine covering English-language fandom across North America and abroad, now appearing roughly annually.



FOSFAX 2005, c/o FOSFA, P.O. Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281, U.S.A. A thick genzine. Despite the zine addressing actual issues and exchanging actual ideas in the letters and columns, the editor, Timothy Lane, has a disagreeable obsession with American political stereotypes, and I finally asked Lane to take my personalzine off his mailing list.

*Impulse* (Oct & Nov 05) & *Warp* 61 (summer) 62 (fall 05): monthly & annual zines of MonSFFA, Keith Braithwaite ed., POBox 1186, Place du Parc, Montreal, QC H2X 4A7; Email: [bigewok@total.net](mailto:bigewok@total.net)

*Ottawa SF Statement* #333, Nov. 2005: Ottawa SF Society, 456 Gladstone Ave., Ottawa, ON K1R 5N8 or editor Sandi Marie McLaughlin, 18 Norice St., Ottawa, ON K2G 2X5; Email [osfs@ncf.ca](mailto:osfs@ncf.ca)

*Under the Ozone Hole* #17, Oct. 05: John Herbert, 2859 Gorge View Dr., Victoria, BC V9A 2H8, email [spuzzum42@hotmail.com](mailto:spuzzum42@hotmail.com)

*The Voyageur* 166, Oct. 2005: c/o IDIC/USS Hudson Bay, c/o Lynda Ciaschini, 7050 Weston Road, Suite 301, Woodbridge, ON L4L 8G7  
Email [ciaschini1@rogers.com](mailto:ciaschini1@rogers.com) / [Linda.ciaschini@rogers.com](mailto:Linda.ciaschini@rogers.com)  
URL [www.idic.ca](http://www.idic.ca)

*Westwind* Nov. 2005 – Jan. 2006: Michael Citrak ed., c/o NWSFS, POBox 24207, Seattle, WA 98124, USA; Email [mcitrak@comcast.net](mailto:mcitrak@comcast.net)

## NOW ON EFANZINES.COM

Recent fanzine additions to eFanzines.com:

7 November 2005 Added David Burton's *Catchpenny Gazette* #12  
7 November 2005 Added Dick Geis's *Taboo Opinions* #73  
7 November 2005 Added Christopher J. Garcia's *The Drink Tank* #51  
4 November 2005 Added Arnie Katz's *Vegas Fandom Weekly* #51  
4 November 2005 Added Jean Martin and Chris Garcia's *Science Fiction/San Francisco* #11  
2 November 2005 Added October distribution of e-APA  
29 October 2005 Added Arnie Katz's *Vegas Fandom Weekly* #50  
28 October 2005 Added Jan Stinson's *Peregrine Nations* #5.2  
28 October 2005 Added Christopher J. Garcia's *Claims Department* #5  
28 October 2005 Matthew Appleton's *Some Fantastic* #6

27 October 2005 Added Christopher J. Garcia's *The Drink Tank* #50  
26 October 2005 Added Bruce Gillespie's *Scratch Pad* #62  
25 October 2005 Added Joyce Katz's *Hard Science Tales* #9  
22 October 2005 Added Arnie Katz's *Vegas Fandom Weekly* #49  
19 October 2005 Added Jean Martin and Chris Garcia's *Science Fiction/San Francisco* #10  
18 October 2005 Added Dick Geis's *Taboo Opinions* #72  
17 October 2005 Mary Reed and Eric Mayer's *The Orphan Scrivener* #35  
17 October 2005 Added Arthur D. Hlavaty's *Nice Distinctions* #11  
17 October 2005 Added Christopher J. Garcia's *The Drink Tank* #49  
14 October 2005 Added Arnie Katz's *Vegas Fandom Weekly* #48  
13 October 2005 Added Laurie Kunkel's *D'Clutter Bug* #2.1  
12 October 2005 Added Christopher J. Garcia's *The Drink Tank* #48



## GROK THIS!

### CONDOLENCES

Justin Brown, husband of Orycon organizer Helen Umberger, survived a plane crash on Oct. 15, 2005. He suffered a broken back, two broken ribs and a bruised pelvis, and on Oct. 17 underwent surgery in Emanuel Hospital in Portland, Oregon. His flight instructor sustained more

serious injuries. As of early November he will be in physiotherapy. (Cards would be appreciated, but I'm still awaiting a current address to send them to.)

Helen Umberger to PorSFis and Orycon email lists,  
Oct. 15 – present, 2005

### MEANWHILE IN SEATTLE

Now open: Yesterday's Tomorrows: Past Visions of the American Future  
at the Museum of Snohomish County History  
1913 Hewitt Avenue Map Link  
Everett, Washington

Downtown, across from the Everett Events Center  
hours: Wednesday-Saturday 1:00-4:00 p.m.

<http://www.cmiregistration.com/user/splash.jsp?org=249>

Or <http://www.yesterdaystomorrow.org/>

Don Glover to SFNorthwest email list, Oct 20



### LET US NOW PRAISE FAMOUS FEN

“The Seattle Westercon Organizing Committee is pleased to announce Paul M Carpentier and Andi Shechter as the recipients of the scholarships to SMOFCon 2005. We congratulate both of them and know that they will be a valuable asset to the SMOFCon Community.”

Sally Woehrlé SWOC Board of Directors  
via Shawn Marier to sfnorthwest email list  
reported by Paul Carpentier, Nov. 8, 2005

((Background: SMOFCon, the longest-running convention organizers' convention, will be held in Portland, Oregon in December 2005. Paul Carpentier of Bellingham has organized Vikingcons, Vcons and a World Horror Convention in Seattle. I know of Andi Shechter as the better half to Stu Shiffman, well-known fan and prestigious fanartist; they now live in Seattle. –GS))

THOG'S BLURB MASTERCLASS, or how to praise particularly massive books: “a back cover quote from A.A. Attanasio warns that `Ricardo

Pinto's *The Chosen* strikes the reader with great force.' [JB]”

*Ansible* 220, Nov. 05

### SCIENCE AMONG US NOW

“On a couple [of VCon 30] panels I briefly mentioned the possibility of weaving fullerene [nanocarbon] tubes, to form a cable which could be used as a space elevator. The following article discusses weaving nanostructures:

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2005/10/051015092708.htm>

“Many thanks to those who put V-Con together.”

Karl Johanson, Oct. 15, 2005

(Note: Karl Johanson is the cofounder and editor of *Neo-Opis*, one of Canada's ongoing independent SF magazines. He won an Aurora Award with John Herbert for co-editing the fanzine *Under the Ozone Hole*. Also he helped create the *Worldcon 89* at Myles' House joke bid. That was great; we ought to do something like that here. –GS)

### THIS IS TRUE:

“THIS WEEK'S HONORARY UNSUBSCRIBE goes to Bill Inman. During his university years Inman contracted polio, but he persevered anyway, finishing his medical education from a wheelchair. As a medical officer for the British government, he saw the aftermath of the thalidomide disaster: the drug, given to expectant mothers to combat morning sickness, caused grievous birth defects. Wanting to ensure such a thing never happened again, Inman developed an early warning system to sound the alert over bad drugs more quickly. His "Yellow Card" system was adopted in 1964 by the U.K. Health Service, and soon detected a problem with birth control pills: they caused an increase in deadly blood clots. He determined the problem could be solved by reducing hormone levels in the pills, which dramatically reduced the problem but didn't reduce their effectiveness, and saved thousands of lives. Still, the Yellow Card system failed to detect a beta blocker which caused blindness, so he lobbied for a stronger system. The government refused to back that effort, however, so he broke off on his own, and helped the World Health Organization set up its own drug-monitoring program. In 1980, he created the Drug Safety Research Unit at the University of Southampton, where he was also named the first professor of Pharmaco-epidemiology, where he taught doctors how to monitor patients for drug reactions. Dr. Inman died October 20 at 76.”

This Is True, Oct. 29, 2005

*SUBTERRANEAN PRESS*  
*OFFERS SLIGHTLY DINGED BOOKS*  
*FOR \$10*

“We've just seen a spate of returns from one of our distributors. These books aren't in perfect condition - with a nick here, or a scuff there, a crumpled dust jacket. We can't sell them as new, so we're offering them exclusively to folks on our mailing list for **only \$10 each**. Regular shipping charges apply. Quantities are limited, so get your order in early.

- *The Hour Before Dawn* by Charles de Lint (\$35)
- *The King and other Stories* by Joe R. Lansdale (\$40)
- *The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines* by John Crowley (\$35)
- *Partial Eclipse and other Stories* by Graham Joyce (\$40)

“Go ahead and order the books as usual through our online store, but don't forget to mention DINGED BOOKS in the comments when checking out. (One note: the Crowley book has been out of print for a while. Order any book via the SubPress store and mention the Crowley in the comments section.)

“If you're paying via PayPal, please send payment to [subpress@earthlink.net](mailto:subpress@earthlink.net). Do not use our online store to order via PayPal.”  
 Subterranean Press, Oct. 25, 2005

*SHE'S SUCH A GEEK*

An Anthology by and for Women Obsessed with Computers, Science, Comic Books, Gaming, Spaceships, and Revolution

\* Slated for Fall 2006 \*

“Geeks are taking over the world. They make the most popular movies and games, pioneer new ways to communicate using technology, and create new ideas that will change the future. But the stereotype is that only men can be geeks. So when are we going to hear from the triumphant female nerds whose stories of outer space battles will inspire generations, and whose inventions will change the future? Right now.

“Female geeks are busting out of the labs and into the spotlight. They have the skills and knowledge that can inspire social progress, scientific breakthroughs, and change the world for the better, and they're making their voices heard, some for the first time, in Annalee Newitz and Charlie Anders' book *She's Such a Geek*. This anthology will celebrate women

who have flourished in the male-dominated realms of technical and cultural arcane.

“We're looking for a wide range of personal essays about the meaning of female nerdhood by women who are in love with genomics, obsessed with blogging, learned about sex from Dungeons and Dragons, and aren't afraid to match wits with men or computers. The essays in *She's Such a Geek* will explain what it means to be passionately engaged with technical or obscure topics – and how to deal with it when people tell you that your interests are weird, especially for a girl. This book aims to bust stereotypes of what it means to be a geek, as well as what it means to be female.

“More than anything, *She's Such a Geek* is a celebration and call to arms: it's a hopeful book which looks forward to a day when women will pilot spaceships, invent molecular motors, design the next ultra-tiny supercomputer, write epics, and run the government.

“We want introspective essays that explain what being a geek has meant to you. Describe how you've fought stereotypes to be accepted among nerds. Explore why you are obsessed with topics and ideas that are supposed to be "for boys only." Tell us how you felt the day you realized that you would be devoting the rest of your life to discovering algorithms or collecting comic books. We want strong, personal writing that is also smart and critical. We don't mind if you use the word "fuck," and we don't mind if you use the word "telomerase." Be celebratory, polemical, wistful, angry, and just plain dorky.

“Possible topics include:

- what turned you into a geek
- your career in science, technology, or engineering
- growing up geeky
- being a geek in high school today
- battling geek stereotypes (i.e. racial stereotypes and geekdom, cultural analysis of geek chic and the truth about nerds, the idea that women have to choose between being sexually desirable and smart, stereotypes about geek professions such as computer programmers)
- sex and dating among geeks
- science fiction fandom
- role-playing game or comic-book subcultures
- the joys of math
- blogging or videogames
- female geek bonding
- geek role models for women
- feminist commentary on geek culture

- women's involvement in DiY science and technology groups
- Stories from women involved in geek pop and underground cultures. These might include comic book writers, science fiction writers, electronic music, musicians, and women interested in the gaming world.
- women's web networks and web zine grrrl culture
- Issues of sexism in any or all of the above themes

Editors: Annalee Newitz and Charlie Anders are geeky women writers. Annalee is a contributing editor at *Wired* magazine and writes the syndicated column "Techsploitation". Charlie is the author of *Choir Boy* (Soft Skull Press) and publisher of other magazines.

Publisher: Seal Press, an imprint of Avalon Publishing Group, publishes groundbreaking books by and for women in a variety of topics.

Deadline: January 15, 2006

Length: 3,000 - 6,000 words

Format: Essays must be typed, double-spaced, and paginated. Please include your address, phone number, email address, and a short bio on the last page. Essays will not be returned.

Submitting: Send essay electronically as a Document or Rich Text Format file to Annalee Newitz and Charlie Anders at sheissuchageek@gmail.com.

Payment: \$100 plus two books

Reply: Please allow until February 15 for a response. If you haven't received a response by then, please assume your essay has not been selected.

It is not possible to reply to every submission personally."

Forwarded by Dick Eney, [dicconf@RADIX.NET](mailto:dicconf@RADIX.NET)  
to the Timebinders email list, 15 Nov 2005

#### AN UPDATE TO ALL FILM MAKERS!!!!!!

Science Fiction Museum and Hall of Fame News Update

"The first annual Science Fiction Short Film Festival, co-presented by the Science Fiction Museum and Hall of Fame and the Seattle International Film Festival, will take place February 3-4, 2006, in Seattle, WA at the Cinerama Theatre and the JBL Theatre at Experience Music Project. The deadline to submit your short film to the festival is November 1st. The final, late deadline is December 1st. The judges will finalize their decisions by January 1st and the film festival will screen the top twenty entries on February 3rd and 4th. Go to [sfhomeworld.org](http://sfhomeworld.org) or [withoutabox.org](http://withoutabox.org) for more information."

P55popcorn to Norwescon and NWConleague email lists, Oct. 21, 2005



(Julie McGalliard, not looking very Goth at VCon 30)

*GOTH HOUSE NEWSLETTER*: 28 October 2005

"The 24-hour comic is up to 7 pm. <http://www.gothhouse.org/>  
Annotated here: <http://gothouse.blogspot.com/2005/10/5-pm-to-7-pm.html>

"There is also Dracula art. Because you know I'm a vampire geek. You did know that, right?"

"Oh, and just in case I added you to the list in the last week: Halloween party on Saturday. Aw, heck, you're welcome even if you're a serial killer. Just, don't kill anyone at the party, okay?"

– Julie McGalliard, Oct. 28, 2005

#### THOG'S MASTERCLASS

"*Words Fail Dept.* `Flast broadcast the nonverbal equivalent of a shrug.' (*Geodesica: Ascent*, Sean Williams & Shane Dix, 2005) [MC]

"*Sound of Silence Dept.* `... number three [thug] leaned against the wall near the window, the automatic in his hand filling the room with a silent buzz.' (Richard Stark [Donald E. Westlake], *The Black Ice Score*, 1965) [TMcD]

"*Heavy/Light Water Dept. or Squid vs Archimedes.* `The main body of the thing is sort of an inverted cup, like a half-inflated bladder, surrounded by a great ring of bone and muscle that anchors these tentacles. The bladder fills and empties with water to enable the creature to rise to the surface, or descend far below – the submarine principle. By itself it doesn't weigh much, although it is amazingly strong. What it does, it empties its



bladder to rise to the surface, grabs hold, and then begins to fill again.' (George R.R. Martin, 'Guardians' in *Tuf Voyaging*, 1986) [TMcD]

"Dept of Born Politicians. 'Untruth was a violin which he played like a Paganini of bunkum.' (Marlon Brando and Donald Cammell, *Fan-Tan*, 2005) [MMW]"

*Ansible* 220, Nov. 05

#### *PATENT YOUR LOUSY SF PLOT NOW*

David Langford wrote: "or, US patent office has attack of *delirium tremens*:

<http://www.emediawire.com/releases/2005/11/emw303435.htm>"

*Ansible* 220, Nov. 05

Stephen Samuel wrote, about the prospect of patents on storylines:  
<http://www.groklaw.net/article.php?story=20051103183218268>  
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/05/11/04/0239221.shtml?tid=155&tid=17>

"Yep. The Patent and Trade office has gone and done it. They've finally gotten into the realm which used to be firmly limited to copyright.

"Patents on story lines – boy meets dog boy marries dog, dog gets girls for boy to eat – PATENT.

"Girl gets into top gun and makes it all the way to air force general – PATENT.

"Death gets laid off and needs to make a living for himself – PATENT.

"The patent in question is a Rumpelstiltskin-type story, except that while 'asleep', the person is still awake, and living a slightly zombified life – so when the trigger 'wakes' him, he needs to recover the history of what he's been doing for the last N years.

"That basic story line is now the subject of a patent, and, if nobody can find prior art for that general idea of a plot line, it will be impossible to write anything vaguely like that plotline without having to pay patent royalties \*whether or not you've heard of the patent or read the story\*.

"This means that writing literature will start to have the same sorts of logical land mines that writing programs have been facing for the last few years...

"You write an innovative and interesting story. After a few years of slogging it to everybody who will listen, you finally find a publisher. It hits it \*BIG\*. Suddenly 17 multinationals with patents on parts of your story line pop out of the woodwork claiming a royalty on your story, and you end up with nothing other than legal fees.

"This ranks right up there with the patent on combining two brands of cereal with milk. (you think I'm kidding, don't you? Well, almost – It's only patent pending at this point, but they're already writing 'cease and desist' letters to cereal bars). <http://freeculture.org/cereal/>"

Stephen Samuel, Nov 4, 2005

#### *TWO-THIRDS OF BRITONS THINK TIME TRAVEL IS POSSIBLE*

"This is your brain.

"This is your brain when you watch too much "Doctor Who."

"Any questions?"

"Click: <http://www.thesun.co.uk/article/0,,2-2005480567,00.html> to find out more.

"Note: If there's any one here who happen to own a working TARDIS (or any other time machine for that matter.) please e-mail me a lungbarrow@shaw.ca . My fetish for non-super model sized females in Victorian dresses has hit a fevered state since the local cable has started to show Turner Classic Movies."

Ray Seredin, Nov. 4, 2005

#### **THE UNSPEAKABLE IN PURSUIT OF THE INEDIBLE** (Annual General Meeting of the WCSFA Board)

A meeting of the WCSFA Board was held at the Executive Airport Plaza on Sunday, October 9th, 2005 commencing at 18:10.

*Present:* Palle Hoffstein; Paul Carpentier; Tammie Gerbrandt; Clayton Hamacher; Mike Cairns; Tarol Hunt; Danielle; Greg Slade; Chilam; Graham Darling; Ray Seredin; Graeme Cameron; Doug Finnerty; Fran Skene; Kathleen Moore-Freeman; Garth Spencer; Steve Forty; Greg Cairns; Deej; Marcus; a woman with marcus and deej; [person with short black? Hair]; Rob (technomage?); Keith Lim; Marie Louise Beesley; Paul ?; Donna McMahon; Clint Budd; Allan Kelly; Susan Walsh; Michael Walsh; Chris Sturges; Jean Smith. Palle Hoffstein chaired.

#### *Next VCon:*

Palle suggested that we hold another meeting in the very near future, rather than trying to determine the committee for next year now. We'll be more likely to attract those that are still interested in helping once the glow wears off. There was a concern that Orycon would be too soon for us to advertise at but we can do generic advertising already. The idea met with overall agreement.

Clint will bid on the next Con but not until he has his entire committee together. Already has Donna as Treasurer and suggested Terry Pratchett as a guest of honour.

Clint also suggested that we look into doing more publicity by attracting a lot of people to advertise for only one day each.

Marie moved that we move on now and look forward to Clint's bid at the next meeting. Greg Cairns seconded.

We need to find homes for all the stuff at Steve's place in the next 3 years. Art boards are still solid and just need a coat of paint. Marie will look into the options for renting equipment or storing it. Steve may have a change of heart but we can't assume that.

*Election:*

President: Steve nominated Palle, Clint seconded.

Vice President: Palle nominated Paul Carpentier, Tammie seconded.

Secretary/Treasurer: Steve nominated Tammie, Palle seconded.

Tammie declined but agreed to continue looking after the website. Clayton nominated Danielle, Tammie seconded.

Members at large: Greg Cairns nominated DeeJ, Steve seconded. Steve nominated Clayton, Greg Slade seconded. Clayton nominated Tammie, Chilam seconded. Greg Slade nominated Chilam, Paul Carpentier seconded.

Marie moved that we close the nominations, Paul Carpentier seconded.

We voted and accepted all as nominated.

*Back to the next VCon:*

Registration reported that we've sold 81 memberships for next year already.

Palle wants to be more available and in much better communication with this year's chair, Clint.

Chris will be hosting a wrap-up party in 2 weeks or so to go over all the stuff left over from the convention.

Financial report should be received within 30 days.

Fran asked to consider payback for Paul Carpentier from 2 years ago. We would payback some percentage of surplus revenue. No standing agreement is in place according to Paul.

Steve moved to adjourn the meeting. Palle seconded, but asked that we stay to discuss venue. Meeting adjourned.

*After-meeting discussion regarding venue:*

How many want to come back here? Some dealers, what about members? Some couldn't make it due to location. Physically challenged can't handle the spread out nature of this hotel which is hard on the able-bodied.

Clayten asks if any contracts say anything about compensation for hotel mistakes (e.g. closing hospitality due to noise complaints). Can't often get that in the contract but you cannot pay for time not used, etc.

Clint asks about research Palle did a couple years ago. Palle says he could dig up a lot of it. Could give more feedback on the hotels he actually dealt with.

Graham is concerned about the number of tracks, especially early on.

Rob has his own business dealings with the hotel here. Suggests that we tell the hotel everything we did like. Paul suggests thank you notes, etc. All agree.

Hotel will be unsure of us so Paul is wondering if we'll come back what is our strength in negotiating.

Fran suggests that we have an early meeting with the hotel, operations, chair, programming, etc. Go over the schedule hour by hour, looking for difficulties.

Fran was not informed about the full extent of hotel size/layout. Thinks we could do better with it next year.

Clayten says that after speaking to other Con-runners hospitality should be the hub of our con. He suggests getting other conventions to run our hospitality for a day or something. Palle says that has been done before and can be again.

Graham suggests more signage would help.

Donna has mixed impressions. Room good value and nice but hotel layout not so good.

Michael suggests that we assign panel attendees ;)





(someone named Shoshanna, at VCon 30)

Need a hotel where we can have naked hottubbing. Nice to get this in the contract up front. Easier if they want your business.

Donna wonders how the hotel was to deal with. Overall good, though there was some trouble with the manager according to Paul.

Marcus suggested that we have all the guests in one wing. Hotel layout was bizarre. Hotels sometimes can't move guests that are long term and therefore they are in our space. That happened here as well, though the hotel tried to move everyone out of our way.

Rob and Yvonne do market research and suggest (and want to discuss) surveys, panel comment cards, etc to get feedback from members and guests. We can code our fliers, registration forms, etc. Could have the moderator fill out info about how many attended the panel, etc.

Clayten & Tammy Hamacher, Oct. 18, 2005

## ADVISEMENTS TO SPEAKERS

*(Internet humour that BCSFAns in meetings, and VCon panelists on programs, might find instructive)*

1 Your participation should bear at least a passing resemblance to the announced topic.

2. If at all possible, you should stop talking before your audience stops listening.
3. If you insist on speaking past your allotted time, you must start giving the next panels presentation.
4. Keep your ego in check. It is our intent to book the best speaker possible, they were not available. We picked you.
5. If you walk around the stage or through the audience, it should be for effect and not because you forgot where you are.
6. If you intend to mumble through your presentation, written transcripts must be distributed to the audience in advance.
7. If you intend to read your presentation, it is forbidden to hand out transcripts in advance. Since they can read faster than you can talk, we want to keep the ending of your talk a surprise.
8. If your speech is going to be a book report, send us the book instead.
9. Minimum content requirements of all presentations include:
  - \* At least one new idea not found in your latest book.
  - \* At least one original idea or way of looking at the world.
  - \* At least one audience laugh....a grin or smirk will suffice.
  - \* At least one take-away idea, this does not include a motivation to cure boredom.
10. If you are one of those speakers possessing that unique ability to stop all the watches and clocks in the room from marking the passage of time, you are required to warn the audience in advance. Nobody appreciates being stuck in a potential temporal time warp.
11. Unless you are intending to give them away for free, all mention of "your latest book" on stage is expressly forbidden.
12. If you speak in a monotone, inform program ops in advance so that we can provide pillows to the audience.
13. If you insist on using PowerPoint, here are the ground rules:
  - \*The folks at the back of the room must be able to read every slide.
  - \*No text less than 30pt in size.
  - \*When selecting font & background colours, no yellow on white or black on blue.
  - \*Read out all the text on a slide on pain of death....consider yourself duly warned.
  - \* Keep the number of slides below the number of minutes in your presentation.
  - \*If there are technical problems, you are still expected to give a good presentation.

All kidding aside..... Speak from your heart, and we'll use ours to listen.

Tracy Penner to OSFCI email list, Oct. 22, 2005

## THE UNIVERSAL VEGETABLE

(Occasional notes on Canadian fandom issues)

(Gaps to fill in: Despite having a variety of pro and fan news from across Canada, I have no recent news about Edmonton, the Prairies, or the Sunburst Awards. Come to think of it, I used to hear about gaming conventions, at least, in Halifax and Wolfville (Nova Scotia) and Brandon (Manitoba) and Regina (Saskatchewan), and I haven't heard anything from those regions, either.)

### About Some Canadian SF Authors

#### *MICHAEL CONEY, 1932 - 2005*

"British-born sf author long resident in Canada, died from cancer on 4 November. After diagnosis this year, he made various unpublished works (including the sequel to *Hello Summer, Goodbye*, perhaps his best novel) available on his website: <http://members.shaw.ca/mconey/>"

*Ansible* 220, Nov. 05

"As I'm sure you're aware, Mike Coney has been suffering for some months from asbestos-induced lung cancer. This to let you know that he passed away in Sydney [BC], November 4."

Eileen Kernaghan, Nov. 4, 2005

#### *LYNDA WILLIAMS BOOK NEWS*

"My book *The Courtesan Prince* came out this year from Edge Science Fiction and Fantasy. It is book #1 in the Okal Rel Universe series. I've just finished draft 1 of book #2, *Righteous Anger*. Brian Hades of Edge tells me it should be out in the summer of 2006.

"*The Courtesan Prince* can be ordered through your favourite bookstore, if not already in stock, or from the Edge Website at <http://www.edgewebsite.com/books/courtesanprince/cp-catalog.html>

"Books in the main series of the Okal Rel Universe are written by myself, or myself and Alison Sinclair, and published by Edge Science Fiction and Fantasy. There are ten planned. Book #4, due to circumstances best explained at cons over beer, was published first. Book #5 is written and awaiting the release of books #2 and #3 before it can go to press. The

rest are planned out pretty thoroughly. A summary of the ten novels in the saga can be found at [http://www.okalrel.org/saga/saga\\_list.html](http://www.okalrel.org/saga/saga_list.html)

"The Okal Rel Universe is also manifest in hosted books published by Windstorm Creative. These are novellas by myself that fill in gaps and "hidden years" in the main series, as well as works by votary authors who like the ORU well enough to work closely with me to give life to some of the many stories set there. As the series develops, Windstorm will market the books and the concept of Fandom Press to fans of the series and writers with an interest in shared universes who are willing to respect the themes of the Okal Rel Universe. <http://okalrel.org/contest/themes.htm>

"We published the first anthology of Okal Rel Universe stories by votary authors this year.

<http://www.windstormcreative.com/fandom/2178X.htm>

"My own novella "The Lorel Experiment" was also released by Windstorm Creative in 2005. It describes the origins of Sevolutites, the superhumans featured in the Okal Rel Universe, and is set in a near future time.

<http://www.windstormcreative.com/fandom/20619.htm>

"The two other Okal Rel Universe books in print, from Windstorm Creative, are satellite books that deal with story arcs suggested in *The Courtesan Prince* and were published in 2004. They are *Kath* and *Mekan'stan*.

"The Reality Skimming Blog, at <http://www.okalrel.org/blog/blogger.html> contains news and ruminations on the part of ORU authors Lynda Williams and Alison Sinclair. Anyone interested in a more interactive conversation can contact Lynda at [lynda@okalrel.org](mailto:lynda@okalrel.org)."

Lynda Williams, Nov. 1, 2005

### Auroras & Convention:

The only Calgary faneditor I know about, Dale Speirs, attended Westercon 58/Convention 2006 in Calgary, in July 2005, and his conreport appeared in *File 770:145*. Rather to his surprise, Dale's fanzine *Opuntia* won him a Fan Achievement Aurora Award this year.

*File 770:145*, Oct. 2005

As noted in the con calendar this issue, TT20 will be Convention 26 in Toronto next July: see <http://www.tcon.ca>. No word yet from Dennis Mullin about Aurora nomination ballots.

Canadian Unity Fan Fund:

Brian Davis of Fredericton, NB is the current administrator.

*CUFF News from Brian Davis:*

“Nominations for the position of 2006 CUFF Delegate will be accepted from December 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006. I will be seeking nominations from Western Canada. The successful candidate will travel to Convention 26, which is being hosted by Toronto Trek 20.

*CUFF Nomination Rules:*

“In order to be eligible as a candidate for the position of CUFF Delegate, prospective nominees must be a Canadian citizen, or a permanent residents of Canada.

Nominees need to complete the following simple steps:

1. Submit a written document outlining their fannish history, and their reason(s) for wishing to be the CUFF delegate. The submission must be dated and contain full contact information.
2. Provide signed nomination letters from six Canadian fans; three fans from Eastern Canada and three from Western Canada.
3. Agree to assume the duties and responsibilities of the position of CUFF Administrator. These include, but are not limited to, financial administration, fund raising, and CUFF race and election running.
4. Represent CUFF and their region of Canada by attending the next CanVention (or designated Canadian convention).

Please direct any questions to:

Brian A. Davis  
45 Charm Court  
Fredericton, NB E3B 7J6  
Email: <badavis@rogers.com>

*Official CUFF Web Site:*

“I will be launching the official CUFF Web site on December 1, 2005. The site is currently undergoing online testing and proof reading. The live URL will be announced within the next couple of weeks.

“All past CUFF winners will have their own page on the CUFF Web site. I am asking past winners to please email a copy of your fannish resume along with a digital photo for your page.”

A partial list of past administrators is available at Garth Spencer’s volunteer website, <http://www.vcn.bc.ca/~hrothgar/cuff.htm>.

They Are Among Us Now: Creation Con, Gatecon and Other Cons

What can Vancouver fans tell Cathy Palmer-Lister about Creation Con?

Cathy Palmer-Lister wrote me in November:

(13 November) “... there is a lot of fuss here [Montreal] about Creation gutting Gatecon. Our belief has been that Creation could not come into Canada anymore because of taxes they owed, but they seem to be doing well in Vancouver. (The older Gatecon is run by some people out of the UK, and it is said to be fan-run. I think Creation succeeded in destroying their event in BC, as their Web page is now focussed only on the UK event.) I have been told that they have also made it virtually impossible for cast members of *Stargate* to sell pictures of themselves in character roles. (Creation had a deal with Paramount back in the *Star Trek* days. Now they are moving into *Stargate* territory, hence the deal with MGM.) Creation is the first pro con I knew about/attended, and I was not impressed. They went after certain local cons, very openly threatening one con-runner in public (KLM) or so the story goes, they became known here as \$Con. Creation went into Boston the weekend of Toronto Trek last year, so TTrek lost Michael Shanks, who had been an almost-signed guest. (He is confirmed for Ttrek for 2006.)

“Some of our members used to fly to Vancouver yearly for Gatecon, but now that Creation has made it virtually impossible for Gatecon to have Gate actors, only two now go to the Creation-run con, and they are very angry about it. It's nothing like the con they are used to, but the only way they can see the actors from *Stargate:SG1* & *Stargate:Atlantis*. Last year, they asked me to find out what happened, but I couldn't get any further than the implication that they were using MGM as a front. This year, Creation seems to be very openly advertising their convention in Vancouver. (Their URL: <http://creationent.com/cal/sgvan.htm> )

“Do you know anything about this? Anything in the rumour mill out your way about how Creation got its foot back in the door? It is important to us because we want to bring in *Stargate* guests. Also, Creation has a reputation for deliberately undercutting fan-run cons; they did a number on a French con here in Montreal, which subsequently went under. We went through a bad patch with SFX coming in the week after Con\*Cept, we don't need Creation back on our doorstep.

(14 November) “I was told the organizers were mostly from the UK, that the con was held in Vancouver because that is where *Stargate* is filmed. When Creation stuck its ugly head into the works, with MGM's blessing, and able to call themselves the only official *Stargate* con, Gatecon tried to fill the blanks with actors from other shows. This year, if

I have read the signs correctly, they have given up on Vancouver and are holding the convention in the UK. One very big bone of contention, according to MonSFFEN who attended the cons, is the way Creation has monopolized the scene. ONLY Creation has access to the sound stages, props, official gear, photos, and so on, effectively making it impossible to have any other *Stargate* convention in the area. Besides making us very, very, angry, to quote a certain Martian, it worries us that we may not be able to advertise a *Stargate* guest of honour at Con\*Cept. We might not be able to use a character shot on our posters, for instance, and the actors themselves might not be allowed to sign photos of themselves in character.”

Cathy Palmer-Lister, Nov. 13-14, 2005  
 Ste. Julie, Quebec, Canada  
 cathypl@sympatico.ca  
<http://www.conceptsf.ca>  
<http://www.monsffa.com/>

### Ottawa

*SANSOUCY WALKER d. Nov. 4, 2005*

“Sometime on Friday, November 4, 2005, Sansoucy Walker, a long-time member of the Ottawa Science Fiction Society, passed away quietly in her sleep. The exact cause of her demise is yet to be determined but she had been suffering from atrial fibrillation for the last few years and was constantly in and out of hospital as doctors adjusted the fibrillator zapper which had been installed to regulate her atrial heart rhythm. ... OSFS and Lyngarde [workshop] member Madonna Skaff had been her closest support over the years and will let us know when ... any funeral or memorial services are scheduled.

“... Sahn was a trained and practising archaeologist until a conflict arose in her work environment, forcing her to make a decision to abandon her career. (Her husband was also a practising archaeologist for the same employer.) Today this would not happen but in those days ...

“Sahn had many accomplishments in her life and many ties to local associations some of which I list below.

- \* One of the original OSFS members
- \* One of the founding members of the Lyngarde Writers Group (a spinoff of OSFS)
- \* Member of the Ottawa Lapsmith and Mineral Club
- \* A published author not the least of which was Winner of the Writer’s of the Future Contest (a function of international SF/F fandom)

“Some of us who knew her from the beginning remember her constant attendance at OSFS functions until her health, in recent years, made it difficult to keep up her previous schedules.

“I also have a vivid memory of a photograph of a beautiful woman (Sahn herself) in a leopard skin bikini stuck on her fridge with the words DIET WOMAN DIET overlapping the picture.”

Sandi-Marie McLaughlin, Ottawa SF Society, Nov. 6, 05

*ALASTAIR GRAHAM WALTER CAMERON (1925-2005)*

“distinguished Canadian-born astrophysicist known in the field as Big Al, died on 3 October. Guy Consolmagno writes: ‘His many accomplishments in astrophysics include pioneering work in the theoretical understanding of nucleosynthesis; the formation of the solar system in a turbulent solar nebula; and the formation of the Moon by a giant impact of a large planetesimal into the accreting Earth – a theory regarded as science-fictional when he first proposed it in the 1970’s but which is now widely accepted. / He was also a great fan of fantasy and science fiction. Active in Canadian fandom in the late 1940’s and early 50’s, most notably he developed a Fantasy Classification System published by the Canadian Science Fiction Association in 1952. When I worked as a post-doc for him in the late 1970s, I learned from his wife that he was still an avid fan of the Doc Smith Lensman novels, which he would re-read regularly!’”

*Ansible* 220, Nov. 05

### **Activity suggestions:**

The latest issue of the *Ottawa SF Statement* lists all the members of OSFS, so that members can correct the membership list, and also lists a number of interesting future activities. Perhaps BCSFAns could take a leaf from their book. Should I list all the BCSFA members I’m certain of, next issue?

We might consider group outings to IMAX and feature movie premieres, like OSFS, or hosting speakers at BCSFA meetings. For instance, in January Dr. Peter Hargraves will speak to OSFS about “NASA: What Went Wrong? Why the Future in Space Never Happened (and some ideas that might make it happen).”

*Ottawa SF Statement*, Nov. 05

### Victoria

As noted in the convention calendar, **Rimcon Victoria** is scheduled for Sept. 22-24, 2006 in the Holiday Inn on Victoria’s Blanshard Street.

For whatever reason it is advertised as “First Annual Science Fiction Convention”. For more information: go on-line at: [www.rimconvictoria.org](http://www.rimconvictoria.org), or inquire by mail to: Registration, RimCon Victoria, PO Box 32108, Victoria, BC V8P 4H0.

Some Northwest fans are reserving opinion about Rimcon. As Margaret Organ-Kean, one of the organizers of Foolscap, wrote to the SFNorthwest email list:

“Um, have they done their homework? Because I see two problems here.

“First, they've chosen a date just a week to two weeks from VCon, which is their closest 'competition' geographically. It's also right on Foolscap weekend, but we don't draw that many Canadians so I don't think they'd draw that many people from our area. They might want to think about who they want to see come to their convention and then sit down with a convention list (local and national) and a calendar.

“Two, they might want to think again about their budget - as in anticipated costs vs. anticipated revenue. Unless they have one spectacular hotel deal or an extra source of income, I can't make their numbers work. Foolscap just went through the numbers for the coming year, and also checked on what other long-standing conventions of a similar type and size were charging for memberships, so the numbers are fresh in my mind. All other things begin more or less equal, they are undercharging by 1/3 to 1/2 as far as I can tell.

“That said, the only other advice I have is:

“Get the website up now, with some method for taking payment on line.

“Plan a really effective, pushy, in-your-face publicity campaign for the next year.

“Make sure your GOHs have links to your site on their front page (other than word-of-mouth, the most effective publicity strategy Foolscap has discovered).”

Margaret Organ-Kean, Oct. 16, 2005

Richard Winder (who I *thought* was a Rimcon organizer) wrote:

“Thanks for your comments, Margaret. I think their hotel deal is actually a fairly thrifty one- probably one of the better options in Victoria for a small con. Also, this being the first one, I think they were trying to hold fees down- start small, see how it goes, and

work from there. They realize it impacts the guest budget, etc., but they are trying to be realistic given the relatively small size of Victoria. Ferry fees being what they are (about CDN \$140 roundtrip from Vancouver for a car w/ 4 people), I'm not sure what the attendance would be like from the mainland. I'll pass along your comments.”

David “Murdock” Malinski, who has been involved in convention fandom in various parts of Canada, observes:

“They are asking an awful lot for the dealers space and the ad rates in PR book and Program are insane ...

“No programming information, just details about 'policy' and how much they want to squeeze out of everyone.

“They have no guest as of this writing ...”

David Malinski, Oct. 27, 2005

### Vancouver

#### *Much Ado about FRED*

For the best part of some time, BCSFA members and fellow travelers have been meeting at a Denny's Restaurant in Vancouver's West End. Recently attendance has dropped off and more and more people have wanted another venue, partly due to mediocre cuisine and ambience.

Ray Seredin wrote: “I would like to take a vote on moving FRED from the Denny's on Davie to the Denny's on Broadway (two block east of the Granville stop, for both the 99B and 98B Express buses).”

Ryan Hawe responded, “Pushing things somewhat, yes?”

“That said, perhaps you may wish to do as I have done, and list the pros and cons of the location. Then, we can set up a poll with all the locations, and have a proper vote with all the choices then.”

Ryan Hawe, 15 Nov 2005

In fact Ryan did some research and sent me:

#### *“THE FRED CAMPAIGNS, PART I*

(The opening text crawls up against a starfield:)

“It is a dark time for local fandom. Although BCSFA is gathering strength, the local meeting, eating, and drinking night – Forget Reality Enjoy Drinking – has become a source of turmoil for the association, with threats of secession and squabbling for control of what used to be good fun.

“With the current venue pleasing few, one lone soul, acting on a not-so-secret list, has dispatched probe droids throughout the GVRD in search of a new base....

+++++++

“...Then I realized that probe droids couldn't comment on the food, so I had to go myself. Darn.

“At any rate. It's come to my attention that certain folk are under the (mis)apprehension that nothing is being done, and that's not quite true, let me assure you. While I don't get out nearly as much as I might like these days, I have taken it upon myself (and a few helpful souls) to scout out potential locations, and provide my findings for further review and consideration.

“Without further ado:

“#1: The Morrissey Irish Pub 1227 Granville Street, Vancouver

“I must admit, while I've not been wanting to be castigating the Downtown as some have done, the Granville strip does hold a bit of trepidation for me, if only due to the concentration of revellers. ‘If you build it, they might puke in front of it’, that sort of thing. Still, I thought I'd pay the place a visit, as there was a going-away party for a friend going on that night. Business and pleasure both.

“On the Pro: Good ambience, licensed, good location, friendly staff, rear seating could accommodate a strong FRED grouping.

“On the Con: Fills up quickly, Kitchen closes fairly early. Service may be an issue with the sheer volume of people, also ambient noise.

“Ryan reports back: If nothing better can be found, this may make a good fallback point. It's at the south end of Downtown, so it is, at least, easy to get to from all sides.

“#2. The Also Lounge 4200 No. 3 Road (Aberdeen Station), Richmond

“I know, I know. ‘A Richmond Location?’ cry out many, shocked at the idea of crossing the Fraser. To which I can only say, the Aberdeen station is in the extreme north of Richmond, so crossing the Fraser is all you'd have to do.

“On the Pro: Open late, great ambience, licensed, not crowded, not too bright, not too dark. A projection screen could potentially be used to show topical material (*à la* FANS).

“On the Con: Location may be a drawback. The food is somewhat expensive. Also, while the music is not at a level to impede conversation, the screen may prove an impediment to the trivia contest.

“Ryan reports back: There's a few big sticking points to this one (most notably cost), but I'd like to keep this place in mind. If not regular FREDs, we could use it for some special event.

“Sadly, those are the only options I've had time for in the past little while, but I hope to have more reports in soon. Also, feel free to discuss the findings, or send me an e-mail if you'd like to join the scouting expeditions.

“The quest continues....”

Ryan Hawe, 15 Nov 2005

#### *VCon 31 Proceedings*

Clint Budd talked about a bid for VCon 31 at the November 19<sup>th</sup> post-VCon meeting.

Memberships in VCon 31 are now being taken by Registrar Howard Cherniack, who can be contacted at #302 – 1330 Graveley St., Vancouver, BC V5L 3A2, tel. 604-255-0796, email [cherns@compuserve.com](mailto:cherns@compuserve.com).

Clint Budd, Nov. 8 *et seq.*, 2005

#### *BCSFA's New Email List:*

“As you may have noticed (and complained about), Clint is no longer able to devote time to maintaining this site as Owner. His attempt to hand over the keys to Graeme resulted in a comedy of errors and a game of e-tag. The end result of this is we no longer have key passwords needed to maintain this site. Certain functions simply cannot be performed, such as clearing out and reactivating the bouncing e-mail addresses and such. What this basically boils down to is eventually, due to lack of maintenance, the site will show up on the Yahoo radar as abandoned and be deleted.

“Are we doomed? Is this the end? Is there NO HOPE?!”

“Well, fortunately, Graeme happened to marry this chick with a heavy case of agoraphobia with nothing but time on her hands. I constructed us a bright shiny new site, moved all the files and photos over there, and we shall simply continue on as always.

“This is not a take-over, it is merely a passing of the torch. Yes, the new site is purple. I'm sorry about that. I happen to quite like purple. The name is a little different, too. I could not use the current name as it is presently in use. But it has all the nifty amenities of this one, and all ya have to do to join is click on the link. I will also be setting up a link to this site here. [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc\\_scifi\\_assc/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc_scifi_assc/)

“I look forward to seeing you there!”

Alyx Shaw, Oct. 25, 2005



“Greetings all!

“I just created a yahoo group anyone can join found at:

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bcsfa\\_archives/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bcsfa_archives/)

“I’ve only just started, but eventually I hope to have a complete index of all zines in the archive (so it can start functioning as a lending library to members) as well a listing of all other material, especially that relevant to the BCSFA & WCSFA executives. This way they can look up what material they might want to see and then make a very specific request.

“Eventually hope to provide not only listing of contents but archive location as well, so it would be a matter of seconds for me to pull the items in question. That way, if the idea was to send some particular item of info from the material by email, no time would be wasted.

“I also hope to excerpt some of the more interesting and amusing material and post it.

“First, of course, I have to unpack the archive, sort it, index it, and place it. Will take quite a while. But I hope to post info along a work-in-progress basis.

“Hopefully this will help turn a passive archive into an active resource open to all.”

R. Graeme Cameron, Oct. 15, 2005

**Todd Gniissios**, Vancouver Public Library employee (who receives archival BCSFAzines) and partner in The Vineyard Restaurant, where some members participated in a wine-tasting club, ran for the Vancouver school board in the civic election on November 19<sup>th</sup>.

#### *CLIMB ABOARD THE NORWESCON 29 EXPRESS*

Ray Seredin proposes that a number of Vancouver fans charter a bus together to the Norwescon next spring in Seattle. He writes:

“I have arranged this package through West Coast Rail Tours, so that anyone can afford it. The deposit is \$131.00\* per-person (\$72.00 if you already have a Norwescon 29 membership or for a kid under 13 year [it’s free if a kid is not using a bus seat].) and covers convention membership, return bus transportation and the admission to the SFM&HF. ...

“Norwescon is one of North America’s largest science fiction, fantasy and gaming conventions, and is just a 3½-hour ride down I5 in Seattle. If you haven’t been to a large con before, just think of it as a lot of small (or VCON-sized) conventions happening under the same roof. If it’s getting boring in one area, just walk a minute, then you may just may find something interesting happening in another section.

“There are panels that can only happen at Norwescon, from the highly entertaining *Girl Genius* radio show, performed by the cult comic’s creators, to learning how to make a fan film with next to no budget, to hearing the latest on real space exploration from people who work for NASA and Boeing. There is also the chance to see the trailers for Hollywood’s latest science fiction blockbusters before everyone else does.

“Norwescon is party central on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. These parties have something for everyone. From those who like to dance the night away with six-foot-tall squirrels to those like to make new friends while talking to a renowned science fiction or fantasy author, while getting a foot massage from a green Orion slave girl. This is what you get when you put up to 2,800 fans together in one place at one time.

“As an added bonus the Norwescon 29 Express will pay a four-hour visit to the Science Fiction Museum & Hall of Fame at Seattle Center en-route to Norwescon 29 on Thursday. This is your chance to see this museum with a busload of fellow SF fans before heading to the convention.”

Ray offers a detailed sign-up form with rates both for the bus ride and for rooms at Norwescon. Contact him at [lungbarrow@shaw.ca](mailto:lungbarrow@shaw.ca).

(Ray Seredin, Nov 05)

#### *ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS*

Garth wants to suggest the following activities for BCSFA events:

- A Personal Pill Contest, where everybody who wants to participate can bring a Ziploc™ bag containing their regular allergy medications. The winner should be the entrant with the greatest mass of daily or weekly medications.
- As Ray Seredin has suggested, we could investigate the recently-expanded options for BCSFA hosting a public-access volunteer cable show on Shaw TV’s community channel.

Garth Spencer, Nov. 2005

#### *WHAT GARTH SPENCER’S BEEN DOING RECENTLY*

- The BCSFA directory is nearly complete. I want to talk the BCSFA executive into producing directories for our members and trades this winter. Now is a great time to tell me what you want to see in your members’ directory, or for that matter what you *don’t* want to see: cartoons, birthdays, lists of your interests, my imaginary biographies for members’ secret superhero identities, or advertising. Hint, hint.

- Also I feel like preparing a new general guide to SF fandom, focused on contemporary fandom instead of fanzine fandom of yesteryear. The

ultimate object is to produce a short little pamphlet, not too daunting for newcomers. Now is a great time to tell me what you want to see in a guide to contemporary activities, fan groups, publications and websites, or for that matter what you *don't* want to see, like maps, compromising photographic evidence from conventions, branches of the Official Dr. Geronimo Fan Club Inc., game theory, or Creation Con advertising. Hint, hint.

- I've been planning to list all my books for sale, but since the majority are non-fiction, running to academic texts and social-science references, how many of you would be interested? Maybe I should post the whole thing on my personal website and see who bites.

- *Interesting Times*, basically a fanzine about mundania, is finally approaching a state of being. At first I was daunted by the apparent infinity of obscure news stories to be covered, about infamies civic, provincial, national and American. Then I decided to start by indexing the news by subject: news from the Canadian civil liberties and the Project Censored websites, and our friend Purple Reptoid, and *The Tyee*, and *The Republic*. This ought to boil down the news stories to some major subjects.

Now the question is: who would advertise in a publication like this?

- Is anyone really interested in doing some original, creative speculation, any reasoned extrapolation from new science and technology, or have we all settled for familiar action/adventure trappings and formula plots? I was wondering whether I could raise a new fan group, or whether we're all satisfied with sliced-processed-homogenized-near-SF&F Product™. Maybe I'm just living in the wrong city. Maybe my persona doesn't have enough charisma points, anyway.

Garth Spencer, November 2005

### Calgary

As noted above, **Con-Version 22** is scheduled for Aug. 11-13, 2006 in Calgary, AB; more information is available at [www.con-version.org](http://www.con-version.org). I have subscribed to their online forum, and hope to establish where in Calgary the convention will be held.

### Maritimes:

#### *THE FREDERICTON SF SOCIETY*

"The FSFS library catalogue is now hosted on LibraryThing.com.

You can browse or search the catalogue here:

<http://www.librarything.com/catalog/fsfslibrary>

"Note: books in this library:

<http://www.librarything.com/catalog/techservlib> are also available."

Rainy the Wonderful Librarian

Quoted by Kevin Boone, [kphboone@nbnet.nb.ca](mailto:kphboone@nbnet.nb.ca), Oct. 15, 2005

*(Note: Fredericton, New Brunswick hosted the Convention in 1999, at inCONsequential II. Kevin Boone also copies starwars.com newsletters to the FSFS. Inconsequential was chaired by Brian Davis, who is now the Canadian Unity Fan Fund administrator. –GS)*

### Yet Another John Mansfield Experience

John Mansfield wrote on Oct. 28, 2005:

"I just realized that Canada has pots of money that no one wants:

Keycon \$20,000 plus

Conadian \$30,000 Plus

Westercon \$20,000 Plus

T3 \$30,000 plus (est)

"Plus other suspected pots: TT - ??"

Cathy Palmer-Lister of Quebec, and I from BC, commented that if anybody had even **heard** about these pots of money in the first place, there'd be a lot of claims or petitions for them. Cathy wrote:

"If I won the lottery, I would invest in a real club house which would have meeting rooms for fan clubs and concoms, have storage lockers in the basement, a library which would also archive the fanzine collections...."

I wrote:

"Whether no one wants this kind of money remains to be determined. (If I could win one of those pots on the condition that I just write for a year, I would apply in a shot.)"

John responded:

"That is why the Canadian art grants are so well fought over, yet kept secret."

Leaving aside John's fantasies, some advertisements for grants and loans which I keep getting from "Canadian Business Publications" at 4865 Hwy. 138, R.R. 1, St-Andrews West, ON KOC 2A0. They write:

*“Canadian Grants & Loans directories 2005*

“Canadian Business Publications is offering to the public a revised edition of the grants & loans directories, guides containing thousands of direct and indirect financial subsidies, grants and loans offered by government departments and agencies, foundations, associations and organizations. In these new 2005 edition [*sic*] all programs are well described.

“Each directory includes: Federal & provincial programs, associations & foundations.

CD-ROMs, Acrobat Reader files

Ontario subsidy directory .....	\$ 49.95
Quebec subsidy directory (French only).....	\$ 49.95
New Brunswick subsidy directory.....	\$ 49.95
PEI subsidy directory.....	\$ 49.95
Nova Scotia subsidy directory .....	\$ 49.95
NL subsidy directory .....	\$ 49.95
Manitoba subsidy directory .....	\$ 49.95
Saskatchewan subsidy directory .....	\$ 49.95
Alberta subsidy directory.....	\$ 49.95
British Columbia subsidy directory.....	\$ 49.95

Canada (more than 3000 programs listed) ....\$ 69.95 or \$ 149.95

Academic (printed) 430 pages)

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[financing2006@canada.com](mailto:financing2006@canada.com), Nov 9, 2005

**Lloyd’s con list:**

Lloyd Penney’s convention list (at the Made in Canada website, and in the *Ottawa SF Statement*) includes conventions in regions of Canada where no fans are otherwise known, and whence no fanzines come:

Comunicon (Jan. 28-29), in Fredericton, NB

Animaritime (Feb. 24-26), in Sackville, NB

FILKONtario 16 (Mar. 31-Apr 2), in Mississauga, ON

Paradise Comics Toronto Comicon (Apr. 28-30), in Toronto, ON

Transformerscon 2006 (Apr. 29), in Toronto, ON

Keycon 23 (May 19-21), in Winnipeg, MB

Anime North (May 26-28), in Toronto, ON

Gaylaxicon 2006 (June 16-18), in Toronto, ON

The Gathering of the Fellowship (July 1-4), in Toronto, ON

Garden City Anime Festival (July 14-16), St. Catharines, ON

Northern Anime Festival (July 22), in Oshawa, ON

International Anthropomorphic Festival (Aug. 4-6), in Laval, QC

Montreal

Cathy Palmer-Lister tells me that Con\*Cept, the Montreal convention, will be held October 13-15, 2006.

Cathy Palmer-Lister, Nov. 2005

**THE JEZAIL BULLET**

(media news)

*RICE DOES BABY JESUS*

“... Anne Rice, the chronicler of vampires, witches and – under the pseudonym A. N. Roquelaure – of soft-core S&M encounters, will publish *Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt*, a novel about the 7-year-old Jesus, narrated by Christ himself. "I promised," she says, "that from now on I would write only for the Lord." It's the most startling public turnaround since Bob Dylan's "Slow Train Coming" announced that he'd been born again. ...”

From “The Gospel According to Anne” By David Gates

In Newsweek for Oct. 31, 2005 (on MSNBC.com)

Passed on by Taras Wolansky, Oct. 23, 2005

*NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN*

“What goes around in SF criticism, comes around. In *Slate's* analysis of the complete *Star Wars* cycle as ‘The greatest postmodern art film ever’, critic Aidan Wasley probes ‘its secret, spiky intellectual heart’ (oh, please let him be joking), goes on about its knowing postmodernism, and realizes in a blinding flash that ‘The Force is, in other words, a metaphor for, or figuration of, the demands of narrative. The Force is the power of plot.’ Like David Bratman (who told me about the *Slate* piece), I was irresistibly reminded of Nick Lowe’s 1986 *Ansible* essay ‘The Well-Tempered Plot Device’, and its insight that realizing the Force is in fact the Plot ‘... makes sudden and perfect sense of everything that happens in the film. “The time has come, young man, for you to learn about the Plot.”’ And so on. (<http://news.ansible.co.uk/plotdev.html#starwars>)”

*Ansible* 220, Nov. 05

TOLKIEN FANS' MOCKUMENTARY

See:

[http://www.sonypictures.com/sphe/ringers/trailer\\_high.asx](http://www.sonypictures.com/sphe/ringers/trailer_high.asx)  
[http://www.sonypictures.com/sphe/ringers/trailer\\_low.asx](http://www.sonypictures.com/sphe/ringers/trailer_low.asx)  
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[http://www.sonypictures.com/sphe/ringers/trailer\\_low.ram](http://www.sonypictures.com/sphe/ringers/trailer_low.ram)

“*Ringers: Lord Of The Fans* shows how, after 50 years, *The Lord of the Rings* continues to spark the minds and hearts of millions. *Ringers* explores the real foundations of Middle-earth; a community of true fans who share a common bond. Moving beyond "cult classic" and over several different generations, the film unearths countless people gathered under the banner of "Ringer" – academics, musicians, movie stars, authors, filmmakers, and a plethora of pop junkies. Celebrity interviewees include Peter Jackson, Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Clive Barker, and David Carradine.

“*Ringers* features a dynamic rock-driven score with musicians who were influenced by J.R.R. Tolkien. Several indie recording artists have provided new covers of songs from previous "Rings" adaptations. Produced in association with the popular fan-site TheOneRing.net, *Ringers* stands as the most comprehensive film document of the ongoing fandom of *The Lord of the Rings*.

“From the hippie counter-culture to the electronic age; from the Bakshi animated film to Jackson’s epic trilogy; this documentary brings together extensive footage collected over 21 months – across three continents. Our cameras have captured the most energetic "Lord of the Rings" events. What began as the private amusement of a tweedy Oxford professor has now become a new mythology for the 21st century.

“*Ringers: Lord Of The Fans* shows how an adventure story published in 1954 has had dynamic ripple-effects through Western pop-culture. *Ringers* carefully pulls away the veil between Tolkien’s book and the creations of art, music, and community that have been inspired by it.

“List of cast names. Peter Jackson, Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Viggo Mortensen, Sean Astin, Dominic Monaghan, Billy Boyd, Andy Serkis, Cliff Broadway, Sala Baker, Clive Barker, Cameron Crowe, David Carradine, Terry Pratchett, Peter S. Beagle, Terry Brooks, Lemmy Kilmister, Geddy Lee, Dr. Jane Chance, Christine Crawshaw, Colin Duriez, Chris Gore, Forrest J. Ackerman, Bill Mummy, Brian Sibley, Colleen Doran, Jill Thompson, Elvis Mitchell, and hundreds of Tolkien fans!

“Special DVD Features:

- "Rock and Ringers" Featurette
- "The Ring Comes Full Circle" Featurette
- Deleted Scenes
- Filmmaker Commentary
- Full Screen Presentation
- Subtitles: English, Chinese, French, Spanish, Korean, Thai, Portuguese
- Audio: English Stereo

More about the film: Director

- Carlene Cardova Producer
- Cliff Broadway, Carlene Cardova, Danny Lukic, Jeff Marchelletta Writer
- Cliff Broadway, Carlene Cardova Genre - Documentary

>From Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, *Ringers: Lord Of The Fans* comes to DVD 11/22/05!

via "Dennis A. Amith" [nt2099@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nt2099@sbcglobal.net)

and Isaac Alexander [isaacada1@yahoo.com](mailto:isaacada1@yahoo.com)

to NWConleague and SFNorthwest lists, Oct. 17, 2005



(“Cyberman”, supplied by Ray Seredin)

The jury's still out on what new science fiction/fantasy shows are going to make it this season, and since the ratings sweeps do not start until a week before deadline, it's unclear what shows are going to make it and what shows are not. Note: the ratings sweeps are being moved to one week later so the advertisers can do a proper assessment of the American networks' holiday specials.

The only piece of news I got is that *Invasion* has been picked up for a full season. Over in cable, all three locally-produced sci-fi shows (*Stargate SG1*, *Stargate Atlantis*, and the new *Battlestar Galactica*) have been renewed for another season. A bit of *Battlestar Galactica* news here: Glen A. Larson is now proposing to do a remake of the original *Battlestar Galactica* movie. However, Universal Studios still holds the rights. (Can you spell lawsuit, boys and girls?)

Space: The Imagination Station has cancelled the late-night movies as of November 2nd. For now they've replaced them with *Kingdom Hospital* (and likely *Mutant X* later in the month) at 11:00 p.m., followed by *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* at midnight. This was bound to happen since they only had a limited amount of films to show. With almost zero interest in B-movies from the Canadian public in general, they're trying to stretch the A-list films they have by airing them only on weekends.

This is my theory on why Space is going downhill while its American counterpart, Sci-Fi Channel, is actually getting way, way better: It's to do with the numbers.

Canada has a population of about 32,000,000 people. Subtract the 7,000,000 who speak French; that's 25,000,000 people. Seven and a half percent (which, according to both the US and Canadian census, is the percentage of people who read or watch science fiction) of 25,000,000 is 1,875,000. Divide that by one-third (which, according to census, is the proportion who read or watch science fiction on a regular basis) and that's 625,000 viewers, which is about the population of Vancouver Island.

The United States has 291,500,000 million people, most of whom speak English. Take seven and a half percent of that, and you get 21,862,500. Divided by three, that's 7,287,500 people who read or watch science fiction regularly, which is about the population of BC and Alberta combined.

The point is that the 625,000 in Canada is a relatively small audience, and if you consider that even regular science fiction fans watch more than the science fiction channel, those numbers will be much lower; let's say about 50,000 hourly for Space. Even in Canada, a cable station just can't make it with 50,000 hourly viewers in prime time, so they try to broaden

their horizons by putting on series that will draw in mainstream viewers – basically anything with the words *Star Trek* in it.

The Sci-Fi Channel went through this problem about three years ago, but they realized that their average core viewership (7,000,000 people, or 583,333 per hour average) is very loyal and dedicated to the station.

So: until Canada has a population that can support a station like Space, and it can become a real core science fiction station much like Sci-Fi, it will just be a waiting game, a long waiting game.

My pet peeve this month is also with Space. Why on October 30th did they put "To Be Announced" in *TV Guide*, and air their quarter-annual World Vision special? Come on. That's got nothing to do with science fiction, and more to do with getting a tax write-off while keeping to Canadian content regulations. I have nothing against the World Vision specials, except the ones made post-2000 because they no longer have William Shatner in it. At least that qualified as horror, especially with the part where he starts to sing.

Over in the UK, there's a new *Doctor Who* spin-off in the works. *Torchwood* is being produced by *Who* producer Russell T. Davies. It will be a much darker, much more adult-oriented series than *Doctor Who*. It will star John Barrowman as Captain Jack Harkness and Charlotte Church as the devil-worshipping evildoer. (Note: Yes, I still remember when she used to sing to baby chicks in Target ads.)

Meanwhile, production has started on episode four of *Doctor Who*, season two. It now can be stated that Anthony Head, formerly of *Buffy*, will not be playing the Master; Rose's boyfriend Mickey will travel in the TARDIS for a few adventures; Rose's dad, Pete Tyler, could be battling Cyberman in a two-parter set on an alternate Earth, and for the first time on the new series, the TARDIS visits an alien planet.

Well-known British actress Pauline Collins will be playing a very wrinkly 60-something-year-old Queen Victoria in the *Doctor Who* episode "Tooth and Claw." Collins – best known to most Canadians as Shirley Valentine, from the film by the same name – played the fashionable young woman Samantha Briggs in the 1967 Patrick Troughton *Doctor Who* story, "The Faceless Ones," and was considered for the role of Victoria (the companion, and not the Queen) on the series, until the part went to Deborah Watling.

Oh, don't forget "The Christmas Invasion" airing on CBC on Boxing Day, where Rose's flat is vandalized and her mum Jackie is attacked by a Christmas tree!

There are unconfirmed rumours that *Doctor Who* may be finally getting a chance to air in the US on BBC America. These rumours are



fuelled by the fact that most of BBC America's children's programs are migrating over to PBS Kids (the Sesame Station, depending on what week it is) and the FCC have recently approved of a BBC news service for America that's going to be known as BBC World US; there go its news and documentaries. So, BBC America is going to be scrambling around trying to fill their time slots with something besides the typical English how-to show; and the Doctor just might do the trick. One rumour even went so far as to say that classic *Doctor Whos* (the ones produced between 1963 and 1989) will air on 8:00 p.m. EST weeknights; and even better, starting with the Tom Baker episodes, with the new series episodes airing on Saturday night at the same time.

I'm just going to tell you one more time: I feel that *Doctor Who* season two will air as part of CBC's Summer Festival next July...though some fans are suggesting they may air the series on one of the off nights during the Stanley Cup finals.

[\*] As The Fourth Doctor would say "Time just works out that way, sometimes."

*Coming in January to BCSFAzine: "Cosmic Ray's Random Rants"!*

#1 goes like this: "Why did the local TV new do a story on a local production of 'The Nutcracker' in mid-October?"

## THE POBBLE WHO HAS NO TOES

(book reviews)

by Donna McMahon

*DOMINION*, J.Y.T. Kennedy (Dragon Moon Press, 05)

*TESSERACTS* 9, edited by Nalo Hopkinson & Geoff Ryman (Edge, 05)

\* \* \* \* \*

*DOMINION*, J.Y.T. Kennedy (Dragon Moon Press, 05)

Gilna is an apprentice "perfumer" – an expert in the mixing of medicines, incense and scented oils. After studying in the plains city of Nenaril Jad, she returns to her home village of Rehinau in the foothills to continue her apprenticeship. But her studies are far from complete when the village is devastated – first by a plague that kills the majority of her

people (including her teacher) and then by barbarians who slaughter the survivors and take their children captive.

The barbarians are the Kurathk, nomadic warriors so ferocious that both the men and women fight and do not breed – they replenish their ranks by snatching children from their enemies and raising them as soldiers. Gilna is spared only because the queen has begun looking for women with useful skills.

Thus Gilna becomes perfumer to the Kurathk queen. But she is only biding her time. Soon she intends to wreak revenge and slaughter the race who have destroyed her own people.

*Dominion* is a book that doesn't fit easily into a neat genre niche, so it's easy to see why it might come out from a small press rather than a New York Fantasy publisher. In fact I found myself puzzled by many facets of this novel until I went to the source herself, who explained that she'd started writing it when she was in university studying Shakespeare and ancient Greek. Then the penny dropped. It's a classical tragedy.

And it's very well done. The settings are strong, the protagonist is compelling, and the situation is altogether too real. It is not a comfortable thing to contemplate how one would react in Gilna's shoes – captured by an enemy after seeing one's own home and people destroyed. Jennifer Kennedy is not a woman to start off with a small canvas.

Finally, this is a page-turner. Despite its darkness, and the unusual prehistoric setting, I found myself sitting up late at night to finish just one more page and then one more after that.

I hope this impressive debut novel doesn't vanish without trace. Its title, regrettably, does nothing to sell the story and makes an unfortunate combination with a cover that looks like a painting of the Canadian Rockies. That conjunction conjures up all sort of misleading visions of Nelson Eddy or "The Maple Leaf Forever", instead of Othello or Medea.

This book is worth looking for. If you can't find it elsewhere, it's at [www.dragoonmoonpress.com](http://www.dragoonmoonpress.com).

\* \* \* \* \*

*TESSERACTS* 9, edited by Nalo Hopkinson & Geoff Ryman (Edge, 05)

*Tesseract* 9 is the first anthology in the *Tesseract* series that I've managed to read the entirety of. The previous *Tesseract*s I sampled (and maybe I was just unlucky in my selections) felt overburdened with ponderous, sombre work that seemed to have been picked for literary 'respectability' rather than story-telling.



*Tesseracts 9* seems different, and it may have something to do with the new trade paperback format which doesn't fit on my shelf as conveniently, but is much more reader-friendly than its tightly-bound little predecessors that kept trying to snap shut on my fingers or jump off my bedside table. (Unreasonable to be influenced by other than literary considerations? Well, hah! I'm a reviewer and I can be unreasonable!)

If I had to pick something that many of these stories had in common, it would be that the vast majority are strongly emotional narratives, rather than aloof exercises of the intellect. This may partly reflect the heavy Fantasy content. Only a few stories, such as "Mayfly" by Peter Watts and Derryl Murphy, could really be characterized as SF.

Still, there's a wide range of material here, from absurdist humour (such as Jerome Stueart's "Lemmings in the Third Year" and Candace Jane Dorsey's "Mom and Mother Teresa") through poetry, vampires and time travel.

Although filled out by some long stories, this collection contains many extremely effective short pieces. Two worthy of particular mention are "Newbie Wrangler" by Timothy J. Anderson (involving desert urchins and a peacekeeping mission) and "The Singing" by Dan Rubin (about an old Inuk woman). I can't say much about either without including spoilers, except to note that they both cover a great deal of emotional territory in a very few pages.

And one reason for that is that both stories revolve around death. In fact, death is a theme in this anthology, lending many stories weight without necessarily making them pessimistic or depressing.

Since Hopkinson and Ryman didn't bother wrestling with issues of Canadian theme or identity (thank you!) and instead just got on with collecting good writing by Canadian authors, there is a wide range of well-realized settings in this volume also. For instance, "Before the Altar on the Feast for All Souls" by Marg Gilks takes place in a vividly drawn Mexican village, and "Principles of Animal Eugenics" by the versatile Yves Menard, uses an imaginary setting equally well – a sort of Stalinist Island of Dr. Moreau.

My favourite for its textured background was Nancy Kilpatrick's "Our Lady of the Snows," about an old woman whose life is changed by a mysterious plaster Madonna. Kilpatrick's description of being poor in a Montreal winter just about makes you smell the socks steaming on the radiators in the dingy welfare tenements.

Time travel aficionados are likely to enjoy "See Kathryn Run," a complex tale of science, intrigue and murder in multiple dimensions by Elisabeth Vonarburg. I was also impressed by Steve Stanton's "Writing on

the Wall" – in which good characterization carries an otherwise simple tale of a mathematician determined to prove the possibility of time travel.

Finally, I must mention "Mirrors," by Rene Beaulieu, a sentimental tale of two survivors from a crashed colony ship, trying to live twenty-five years until the next ship arrives. A little melodramatic, perhaps, but I certainly couldn't put it down.

In summary, this is what I think a *Tesseracts* collection ought to be – a showcase for good Canadian writing, containing a widely varied selection of compelling stories. There should be something here for everyone.

## THE RUBBER PLANT IS FREE

Jeff Wayne's Musical Version of  
*The War of the Worlds*  
Greg Slade, 11 Nov 2005

I should probably start out my saying that I have loved \*Jeff Wayne's Musical Version of the War of the Worlds\* ever since my buddy played the LP for me way back in the stone age when I was in college. I had heard rock operas before, of course, but this one has always been my favourite. So, when I happened across an ad for a live presentation at the planetarium, I knew that I had to go. As it happens, I very nearly didn't. This month has been filling up with events, and work has been very stressful, so I was tempted just to go home and go to bed, but I knew I'd be kicking myself if I missed this opportunity, so I went.

For those of you who have never been to the planetarium, the theatre is circular, with a large "pit" in the middle, from whence the star projector rises when needed. There is no stage as such, but one wedge of chairs has been removed to make room for the band for this occasion. I was saddened to see something like 80% of the remaining seats empty. Has nobody else ever heard this album? (<http://associate.com/camsoc/greg/music-st.html>)

Once the lights went down and the music started, the first thing I noticed was how good the band is. Consider how many "cover bands" there are in the world, and how few of them are worth listening to. Then consider that this particular band, which is surprisingly small, is attempting to reproduce the sound of what is, in my opinion, the best rock opera ever written, in a tiny little wedge of space, for a tiny little audience. It must be awfully tempting for them just to do the minimum necessary to get through the evening, but no, these musicians are amazing. If you love

the album, as I do, you will not find this performance disappointing in the least. If you haven't heard the album, then you should come to understand why people like me love it so much.

The second thing I noticed was Jurgen Gothe's voice. Now, in the album, the narrator is Richard Burton, whose rich tones go a long way to making the album the amazing experience that it is. Now, Gothe's "day job" is to host a classical music show on CBC FM in the afternoons. On that show, he adopts the same "mellower than thou" tones as the other CBC FM announcers. (You actually have to pay close attention to what he's saying to realise that he is, in fact, pulling your leg for most of the show.) So, I assumed that he would adopt that same tone of voice in this role, but in fact, he plays it straight: normal speaking voice, and no attempt at an English accent. Upon reflection, that's probably the right way to do it, because the more artificial the narration is, the harder it would be for people to get lost in the story.

Then, Andy Toth started singing "The Eve of the War" (which was sung by Justin Hayward vocalist of the Moody Blues, on the album.) Like the rest of the band, he does an amazing job. (All the more amazing when you consider that he has to sing most of the songs in the show, seven nights a week, for the whole run of the show.)

Things got even more interesting at the beginning of "Horsell Common", as the bassist, while continuing to play that compelling bass line, walked out of the area set aside for the band and into the circular aisle around the projector pit. In fact, most of the band played curious villagers at this point, which indicated to me that, not only were the narrator and the singers using wireless microphones, but some of the musicians were using wireless pickups. When the time came for the first Martian to rise up out of the cylinder, the star projector rose up out of the pit, and towered ominously over the cowering villagers. (It was this way throughout the whole show, as the producers used the unique setting of the planetarium to maximum effect. Even as the venue imposes limitations on the production, it also has unique strengths.)

I should probably say at this point that the production was really more like a concert, with some acting, than like a musical play. For one thing, the shape of the theatre places pretty severe limits on the blocking. For another thing, much of the action happens up on the dome, with still images, video, and laser effects, so you don't really pay that much attention to the cast except when they're singing or talking. Even so, the actions of the band/villagers were fairly stylized, and Gothe seemed somewhat awkward when he was supposed to be interacting with other cast members, as opposed to straight out narration.

Fortunately for his vocal chords, Toth didn't have to carry the entire burden of singing throughout the show. Neil Minor played the artilleryman, and he, too, did a stellar job. His rendition of "Brave New World" later on in the show was utterly brilliant. But the biggest vocal surprise for me was Renee Cook, who played violin, and sang the part of Beth in "The Spirit of Man." That role was performed admirably by Julie Covington on the album, but Cook sent shivers up my spine with her rendition. (She told me after the show that this is her public singing debut. I wonder what she's going to do for an encore.)

All in all, the show was an utter delight. I am only saddened that so few people chose to experience it. The low turnout makes it unlikely that the run will be extended or repeated, so those of us who did show up are going to have to treasure that unique experience in our memories.

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(604) 277-6775, or go to  
<http://groups.msn.com/richmondwriters/>

*Art Credits*

Sheryl Birkhead..... title logo  
Felicity Walker . cover, other photos  
Ray Seredin .....p. 46  
Garth Spencer.....clipart

*Why You Got This:*

- You are a member.       You are a non-member.  
 Just for the taste of it.       You're a wild and untamed thing.  
 You dropped a dime on Johnny "Johnny Zines" Zinarelli.  
 You're a bee with a deadly sting.